

Calvinist Contact

An independent Christian weekly

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Christian convert fears for his life

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — "As I was at work in the supermarket [I owned in Beirut] some fanatical Muslims came fully armed and beat me up and tied me. They beat my wife and children as well, saying, 'Go to the Messiah in whom you have put your faith!' They threatened that if we returned to our home, death would be our end."

This is what Khalil Al Ghabra wrote to Rev. Bassam Madany, Arabic broadcast minister of the Back to God Hour in 1986, after he and his family had fled for their lives to West Germany.

Ghabra, his wife and their four children, ages 6, 10, 12 and 13 at the time, had grown up as Muslims but had converted to Christianity. They were secret Christians, attending church secretly about twice a month. One day an acquaintance saw them going to church and told their parents.

When asked about it, they at first denied it. But persecutions began. Through their pastor they made contact with a pastor in Montreal, who helped them apply for immigration to Canada. They were told it would take five to six months.

But two months later his supermarket was burned down, his house dynamited, his two cars were confiscated and he and his family were beaten and threatened. They escaped to the Convent of the Dominican Sisters in Beirut, who helped them flee to Germany.

Apostates are punished by their family

Muslim tradition and law, going back to the holy book, the *Quran*, consider anyone who leaves the Muslim faith for another religion to be an apostate. The apostate, says Madany, is subjected to persecution and the possibility of death. This punishment is usually executed by the convert's own family, because it is

considered a blot on the family honour to have someone leave the true faith. Ghabra wrote to Madany, "We have heard that our relatives in Lebanon (on my wife's side) and our relatives in Syria (on my side) have met and made a decision to put us to death if we ever get back to the Middle East."

Although this kind of situation is hard to believe in our day, the persecution and killing of "apostates" is required by the Islamic legal code called *Shari'a*, which is the law of the land in some Islamic nations. Amnesty International confirms that most schools of Islamic thought give the apostate a "chance to return from their error to Islam and follow the ordained path. [But some are particularly harsh in that they say that whoever was born into Islam and turns away from it should be killed and no repentance accepted.]"

The Ghabra family has been living under difficult circumstances in West Germany since 1986. The West German government is trying to deport them to Syria, because Ghabra is a Syrian national, though his people have lived in Lebanon since 1920. Ghabra is certain he and his family would face death there.

Christian Reformed help

The Christian Reformed Church in Canada has been trying to bring the family to Canada with either refugee or immigrant status, but both have failed

See CONVERTS — p. 3.

Thinkbit

One of every four children [in North America] will become a problem drinker in high school. Thirty-five per cent of high school seniors regularly abuse drugs.

From: "Generation at Risk," a PBS documentary (quoted on the back cover of a Zondervan book).



Photo: courtesy Shirley Madana

The Ghabra family, persecuted for the faith.

Labrador Innu protest growing militarization of their land



Photo: Bob Bartel

An Innu family from Labrador.

Bob Bartel

HAPPY VALLEY/GOOSE BAY, Labrador (MCC) — From September through December, last year, the Innu people of Labrador maintained a sustained protest against military expansion at the Canadian Forces base at Goose Bay.

The protest began September 12 when two young Innu men and their priest occupied a practice bombing range 100 kilometres south of Goose Bay. The occupation forced Dutch, British and West German air forces to halt practice bombing over the site.

A few days later a determined group of between 60 and 75 Innu, young and old together, walked on to the tarmac runway at the base. The act was repeated seven more times, sometimes by groups of around 200 people, as the Innu sought to tell their story of unjust treatment by the Canadian government.

The elders, mothers with children in their arms and young people walked through the coils of razor wire and down the runway. The peaceful nature of the protest had an effect on the riot squad called to quell the disturbance; squad members left their guns, helmets and shields behind when they answered the call.

Disrupting lifestyle

Over 100 Innu were charged, with 21 spending at least one night in jail, while some spent two weeks in prison. The 21 were charged with mischief; their trial begins April 4. A protest camp at the end of the runway was maintained from September 22 to December 12.

The Innu are protesting the illegal seizure of their land, which they call Ntesinan, by the government of Canada. The Innu have never ceded the land to the federal government through a treaty. Yet the federal and provincial governments promote development on the land without consulting the Innu, taking traditional lands whose wildlife resources have sustained the Innu for centuries.

The Innu are trying to negotiate with the federal government. But the government only negotiates six land claims at one time. The Labrador Innu are not on that short list (although the neighbouring Inuit, who are also affected by the low-level flying, are). Although some of the six currently on the list have been settled in principle, it will take years to work out the details. In the meantime, the Innu have no interim protection against increased development of their land, even though their claim was recognized as legitimate in 1978.

See INNU — p. 2

In this issue:

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Innu worry about environment and health



In May 1985, Innu leaders gathered at Northwest Point near Sheshashit, Labrador to discuss their common response to low level flying. After three days of meeting in traditional style, they came up with a unanimous position of protest against the military use of Quebec and Labrador air space. Seated in the centre is chief Philippe Pietacho, from Mingin, who presided over the session.

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Meanwhile, the Innu are forced to watch as the Canadian government escalates the low-level air force training over their land. Every year jet aircraft from West Germany, the Netherlands, the U.S. and Great Britain come to Labrador to simulate low-level attacks against the Soviet Union. Additionally, the Canadian government is trying to get NATO to choose Labrador as its centre for low-level training. NATO will choose between Labrador and Konya, Turkey.

At the same time, the province of Newfoundland and Labrador is hoping to complete a deal with Quebec to build two large hydro-electric projects on the lower Churchill river. The projects will flood large portions of Ntesian.

The growing militarization has been especially troubling for the Innu. It has continued unabated despite the fact that studies for a Federal Environmental Assessment Review Process are not complete (they are not expected until fall). Around 1,000 more low-level flights took place in 1988 than in 1987. Beginning next flying season, jets will be allowed to practise high altitude combat manoeuvres for the first time in specially marked areas. These areas are

prime hunting territory for the Innu; they will be subject to the booms of supersonic flight. The Innu have not been consulted.

May affect health, environment

The Innu are also worried about the possible health effects of new laser technology. On four different occasions jets dropped laser-guided weapons on the range, despite recommendations from the Canadian Public Health Association "that the further use of laser technology be deferred until the environmental studies are completed." When asked about this, senior military staff shrug their shoulders and say they "didn't know about the recommendation."

The protests have been embarrassing for the Canadian military, who could not guarantee use of the runways of bombing range to the foreign nations who use the area for low-level flying. In an effort to increase security, the land on which the base is located is to be transferred from the Department of Public Works to the Department of National Defence in April. Lt. Col. Jodoin of the Canadian Forces says there will be greater security and a tougher approach to Innu protest when

the flying season begins again that same month.

Meanwhile, support for the Innu is growing, with the Assembly of First Nations, Native support groups, churches, peace groups, environmentalists and others

from Canada, the U.S. and Europe calling on the Canadian government to negotiate the land claim with the Innu.

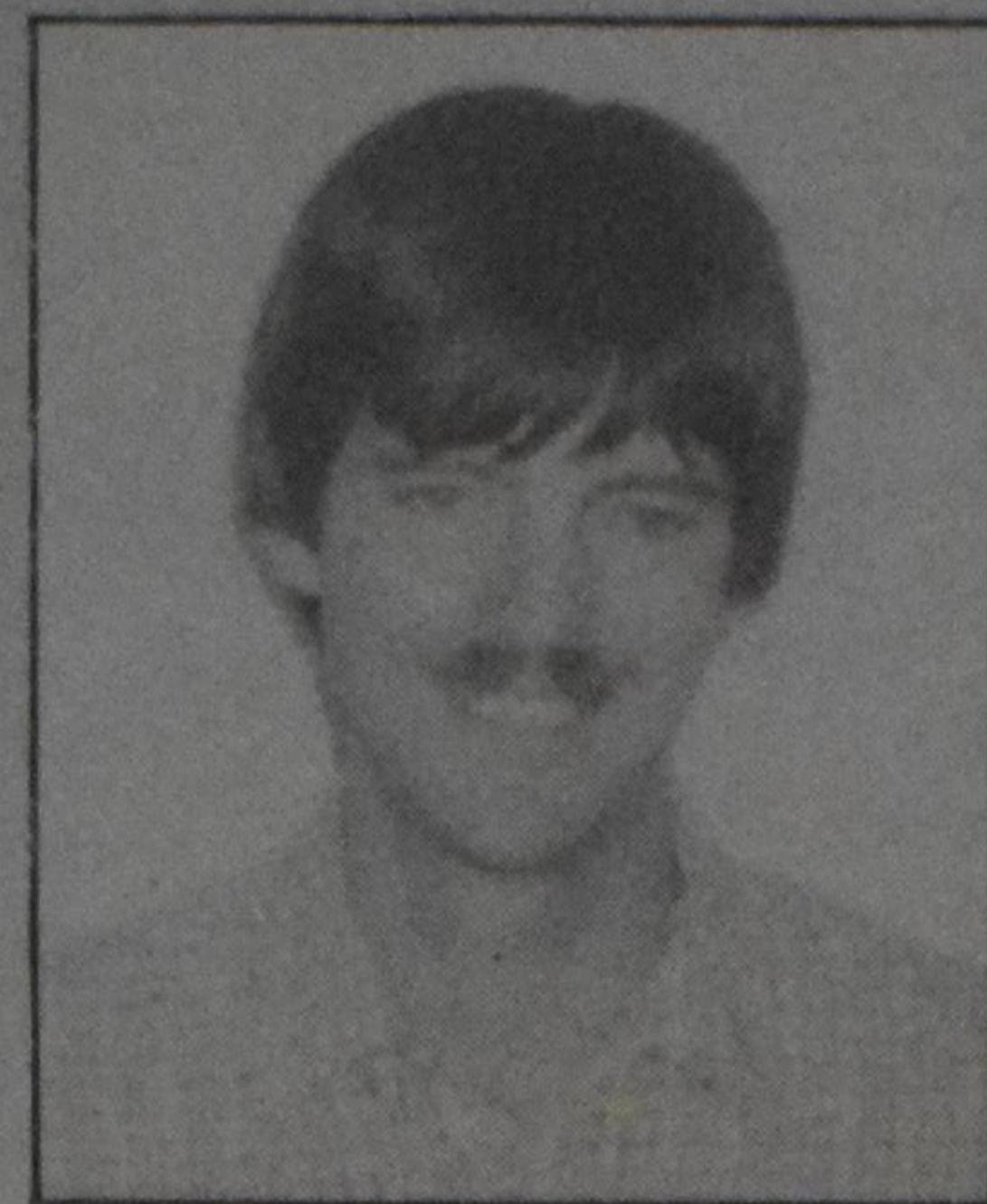
A highlight for the Innu was the December 9-11 visit of Dr. David Suzuki, who spoke with elders at a hunting camp and

visited the protest camp. Suzuki stressed that the knowledge of Native elders was crucial to saving our environment.

Although the protest camp is now closed, future protests are planned for spring.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Syd Hielema, Clarence Joldersma, Jake Kuiken.



Seeing God (1)

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. (Matt. 5:8)

To the pure, all things are pure. (Titus 1:15)

John Wesley took the above two verses, and combined their separate thoughts to create the statement, "The pure in heart see all things full of God." Many of the "all things" that we see come to us through the eyes of the news media, leading me to wonder how they help and/or hinder us in seeing all things full of God. I suspect they do both. In this column I will explore the hindrances, and in the near future analyze the more difficult issue concerning how the media can help us see God.

If seeing God requires purity of heart, what is purity of heart? No doubt it requires in part a "hunger and thirst for righteousness," as another Beatitude suggests. The news establishment, however, often displays just the opposite: a hunger and thirst for embarrassment and error. I experienced this most keenly while watching the three federal party leaders debate last fall. I discovered that I felt a sensation of nervous suspense identical to the suspense of watching Brian Orser perform in the men's figure skating final at last year's Winter Olympics in Calgary. In both cases I was on edge because I was waiting for the tragic fall, the big mistake, the disaster. In both cases I felt "hyped" into waiting for the execution of the embarrassing *faux pas*.

Foot-in-mouth disease

No doubt errors made in prominent places are legitimate news events, but when they are reported with such fervor they pander to a human instinct to rejoice in the wrongs of others. Did the Ben Johnson steroid scandal truly merit 20 times the coverage of others' victories? Must every political proclamation that mistakenly places foot-in-mouth receive a headline? Passively receiving such reporting does not build one up in purity of heart but encourages smug, self-satisfied judgmentalism. To be pure in heart is to recognize such reporting as superficial window-dressing, and that the issues which involve understanding our God, our world and ourselves lie much deeper.

The savouring of embarrassment isn't the only arrow the media shoots our way. Canadian journalist Robert Fulford once remarked that the primary purpose of the news

media is to keep the middle class dissatisfied. It does so by persuading us that our rights are being trampled on, that we're being cheated and lied to, and that others have it better than us. During the next month check your media sources for these sorts of stories:

- Medicare is failing Canadians because people are dying while waiting for surgery, and residents of the Far North don't have access to the same services as the south does.
- Free trade is forcing big corporations to merge, laying off thousands.
- In spite of tighter regulations, there are serious problems with refugee claimants.
- Residents of a posh suburb protest halfway house for dangerous offenders.
- Interest rates are likely to rise again.
- Swedish standard of living remains higher than Canadian.

We've all seen such headlines, and could easily add a dozen more to this short list.

Legitimate struggle?

Each of the above items is legitimate news. People are dying because hospitals are understaffed, and the problem certainly seems solvable. But the media zeroes in on the scent of discontent and fans it as far as possible. The advertising industry (which underwrites the news media) thrives in an atmosphere of dissatisfaction because this spirit breeds the desire to purchase products. The believer working to be, as Paul was, "content in whatever state I am," struggles on.

News reporting that caters to a complaining society receives no such response from the pure in heart. Purity in heart learns to discern the distinction between evil which must be protested, hurt which calls for compassion, and difficulty which must be endured with patient perseverance. The news media will not make such distinctions; the pure in heart will.

Recognizing the media's appetite for embarrassment and desire to build dissatisfaction doesn't help one see God. Perhaps it may lead us to recognize spirits which attack our purity of heart. When we grow in purity of heart, Christ promises that we will see God. I believe that the media also unwittingly lead us to see God.

Staytuned....

Syd Hielema teaches music and English at Toronto District Christian High School, Woodbridge, Ont.

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Converts, not lifelong Christians, are in danger

...continued from page 1.

to this point. Peter Zwart, Refugee Co-ordinator for CRC World Relief, has been working on the case for two years. The CR church in Guelph, Ontario, helped by its member Jack Thalen, Back to God Hour representative in Ontario, has formally offered to sponsor the family.

But the Canadian government has rejected Ghabra's application. He received a letter from the Canadian Embassy in Bonn which says: "Your application has been considered within the Convention Refugee immigration category, in view of your claimed fear of persecution if you were to return to Syria 'Convention refugee' means any person who, by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, by reason of such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country On the basis of the information provided during your interview and according to our own research on the situation of Christians in Syria, we have had to conclude

that you do not meet the definition of Convention Refugee as you provided very little credible evidence to support your claim."

The Canadian government's position is that Syria is safe for Christians, says Zwart, and it points out that Christians are even members of the government. But he adds that the government has not taken into account the difference between Syrians who were born into Christian families and have always been Christians, and those who have converted from Islam to Christianity.

That is a crucial point, but it is difficult for government officials to understand it. And if they do understand it, it is difficult for them to act on it, says Zwart, because officially the government of Syria tells Canada and other countries that it has freedom of religion, and it has its Christian citizens to prove it. Syria can also show that it has signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which forbids religious persecution.

That makes it hard for Canada to tell Syria it has accepted a refugee claim from one of its citizens on the basis of a well-founded fear of religious persecution. It becomes diplomatically difficult for the

Canadian government, at any level, to recognize that Syrian converts to Christianity could be killed by members of their own families without protection by police or government, which Ghabra claims may happen.

But Thalen is actively pursuing with his Member of Parliament, William Winegard, his contention that converts face risks that lifelong Christians do not face. Winegard has promised Thalen to get an answer on this difficult point from Minister of Immigration Barbara McDougall.

If Ghabra is not able to withstand Germany's efforts to deport him and his family to Syria, Madany would like to see full-scale pressure on elected Canadian government officials to intercede in his case. The Back to God Hour does not want to be in the position that in some countries the success of its broadcasts in converting people to Christianity could also produce modern-day martyrs.

(Please ask your MP to read this article and to seek action. Ed.)

Refugee sponsorship urgently needed

CC staff

BURLINGTON, Ont. — According to Peter Zwart, Refugee Co-ordinator for the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee of Canada (CRWRC), the need for private sponsorship of refugees is greater than ever. In 1989 there are 13.3 million refugees in the world, up from 11.7 million in 1986.

In a January newsletter to deacons of the Christian Reformed Church, Zwart makes the following appeal:

Last month we shared with you our desperate need for sponsors. We urged every church to very seriously consider sponsorship. Why? Because *lives of people are at stake in various areas of the world*. People will be deported to countries which once were their homes, to face imprisonment, hardship, injustice, and possibly death. We have at least 50 cases who need immediate help. These are people, families and singles, from Europe, from the Middle East and Asia, from Africa, from South-East Asia, and from Central America. *They have all one thing in common: they need help and they need it desperately.*

As you know, refugee laws in Canada were changed January 1 for those who claim refugee status in Canada. *What has not changed is private sponsorship.* A small number of churches are constantly sponsoring refugees, and we thank you for it. However, from the other churches we received no reply to our plea in December. What is so different from 10 years ago when almost all churches sponsored refugees? *Between exile and hope still 12,000,000 refugees wait.* Not every refugee in the world needs to be sponsored. However, some do!

We can no longer idly sit by. Deacons need to give leadership. To meet this need pick up your phone today (or write us) and ask for additional sponsorship information. DON'T WAIT. ACT NOW!

For refugee sponsorship contact: Peter Zwart Refugee Co-ordinator, CRWRC of Canada, P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8 or phone (416) 336-2920.

(See page 8 for Calgary sponsors.)

Proposal for new approach to poverty well received

TORONTO (CPJ) — Citizens for Public Justice made a presentation to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, a committee consisting of MPPs appointed to make recommendations to the Treasury concerning Ontario's budget. However, rather than come to the committee with yet another request for government funding, CPJ instead proposed a new approach to economic and social development in Ontario.

CPJ first endorsed *Transitions*, a report from the Social Assistance Review Committee dealing with social assistance and government policies needed to help alleviate poverty in Ontario. CPJ recommended that the present government begin implementation of the report's recommendations.

CPJ's second recommendation urged the Ontario government to change the process of making budgetary decisions. Present economic policies aim primarily at generating economic growth, allowing unacceptable levels of poverty, stated CPJ researcher Paul Eastwood. The current budgetary process results in an

unrealistic list of competing requests for funding.

CPJ recommends instead a *Roundtable on Social Policy and the Economy*, to integrate economic development and social goals. CPJ's research indicates that planning the two together will benefit the economy in the long term and provide real assistance for those who endure poverty in Ontario.

Committee Chairperson David Cooke commended CPJ

for its work, stating that CPJ's was *one of the best presentations* they had heard. Other MPPs were also impressed with CPJ's research and endorsed its recommendations.

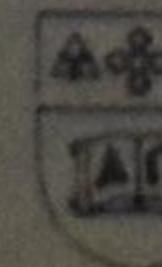
CPJ will continue to monitor the activities of the committee, urging members to act on the recommendations, and lobbying all MPPs to support CPJ's proposal.

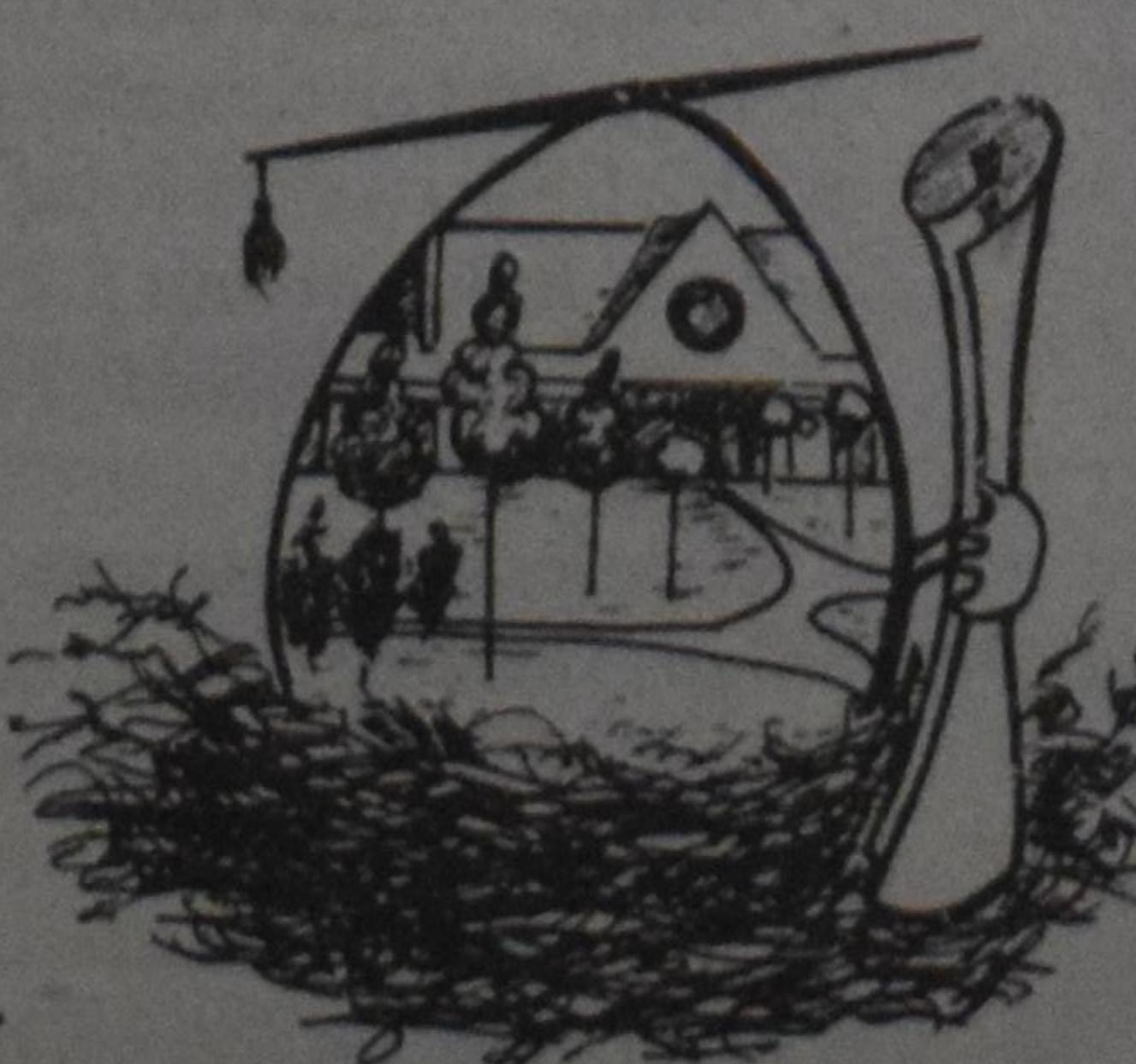
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Employment Equity Act: Friend or foe?

The Employment Equity Act took effect in August 1986. The first report on the early results of that act has just been released (see news story and special report in C.C. last week). The act, much like its earlier and further-reaching U.S. counterpart, is designed to identify and eventually eliminate workplace discrimination against women and three other minorities: aboriginal peoples, other non-whites and the disabled. (Women, incidentally, are no longer a minority of Canada's population.)

The report indicates that there is substantial workplace discrimination against all those minorities: if you're a part of one or more of those groups, it is not unlikely that you will be subject to lower salaries, lack of promotions, and simple inability to get certain jobs, compared to those in the male "mainstream."

Cacophonous music

Many people, including a lot of Christians apparently, are not convinced of the value of this legislation, and in fact, view it quite negatively. Some say that such "affirmative action" laws are "reverse discrimination" and that they will result in unqualified minority people holding jobs that could have or should have been filled by qualified majority people (i.e., white males).

Others see it as just one more means by which to encourage (married) women to go out and work instead of exclusively caring for their families. Some still question whether working women "need" to be paid as much as men. (Where that leaves single women or single mothers is not relevant, it seems.)

I don't have much sympathy for the "reverse discrimination" viewpoint. I think it is a stance that doesn't exactly ring out clear, crisp peals of biblically-inspired justice. Such an attitude strikes a dissonant chord in my heart.

In practical terms, such a view assumes that all white males who have jobs are imminently suited to those jobs, are highly qualified to fulfil the duties they encounter and do so satisfactorily. That simply isn't true. In reality, women and members of minorities, because they *are* women or minorities, have often had to be *better* qualified than available white males to be able to get, hold, and be promoted within a particular career.

The Employment Equity Act is designed to stop that kind of inequity. This legislation's heart is aimed at making restitution for past sins and preventing new ones against those who have the least power in our society — those whose social status (because of race, sex or disability) leaves them open to oppression. That should resonate positively within Christian hearts.

The Bible is full of injunctions to act with compassionate justice towards widows, orphans, aliens and the poor — the "minorities" of biblical times. Israelite landowners, e.g., were to leave a little extra grain at the edges of the fields and fruit in the vineyards. They were not to glean twice, cleaning up every last grain and grape, but were to deliberately leave some for "the poor and the alien" (Lev. 19:9-10, NIV) — the "disadvantaged," we might say. Fields, vineyards and olive groves were even to lie fallow every seventh year so that the poor could be fed, and so that the *wild animals* could have what the poor didn't consume.

It would have been less complicated and more self-beneficial, humanly speaking, if the Israelites had ignored those injunctions, caring only for "their own kind." But that is not God's way. And it shouldn't be ours.

The extra mile

Our government is to be commended for devising and enforcing this law. It isn't perfect and it's only a start, but it attempts to balance the gross imbalances of the past, to redress wrongs, and to make the future a little brighter and more secure for those who

Guest Editorial

would not have had much of a future. I think it is an example of going the "extra mile," admittedly at the expense of those of us who are relatively prosperous and well-treated.

But is it really at our expense? Is there really much cost involved for those of us who are "mainstream" Canadians? I think not. And if there is, so what?

The Employment Equity Act is an example of a secular government recognizing and attempting to correct workplace injustices which many Christians don't even want to acknowledge. The sad irony of that should not escape us. Nor should eternal consequences of such carelessness.

Marian Van Til

Avoid spiritual constipation

Constipation ... not a very pretty word but a painful reality. Cause? More intake than outgo! The body is a channel, not a reservoir.

Cars take gasoline; they spit out exhaust. Lakes need inlets; and to stay fresh, they need an outlet. The Dead Sea receives but doesn't let out and it's dead. The farmer produces food but when there is no market, or no way to get it to the consumer, the farm goes to pot.

Where there is life, there is intake and outlet. Without either, death is eminent. It's God's balance between in and out.

That's also true spiritually. When we take in without giving or sharing, we become (pardon me!) spiritually constipated. Attics become glutted; closets, basements and garages groan with overloads. We buy more; so, we have garage sales to make room to buy more. Funny people, aren't we? Insecurity finds confidence in an accumulation of possessions.

Increased security in Christ leads to the greater recognition that my source of self-worth lies in a relationship of peace with God. The more I enjoy that, the more free I become! A new joy enters my life in which I learn that things are to be shared, rather than to be saved, collected and sold again. In that way, they are a blessing. It's true; it is more blessed to give.

Expecting another flood?

Money too, I learned the hard way, is a commodity that works only when it is spent. The test lies in how it is spent and for whom? Keeping it for its own sake often causes it to become the carnivorous beast inside of us that eats away at stomach linings, causing ulcers. Or it puts an unbearable load on the heart, causing heart failure. A bit for future rainy days is in order, but are we expecting another Genesis deluge?

God created a world that gives and is renewed. Soon spring will be here, and all comes to life again as God refurnishes his world with a fresh crop of food. Daily manna still comes our way. Gross accumulation on our part is often a demonstration of distrust. We're not sure that He will be around tomorrow to supply fresh manna.

It raises awkward questions. What is need and what is greed? What is needed to live, and what is needed to show a success image? If I am insecure, what does it take to bolster it? Maintaining an ego is a costly business, I learned. May I collect and store, and haul it from place to place, while others lack basics? A recent reading of Proverbs 11:24, 25 and 28 caught me up short.

My prayer for 1989 is, "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace." I sing, "Channels only, ... flowing through us, you can use us ..." God give us insight to live with biblical integrity!

Dr. Henry Wildeboer
 pastor of Zion Christian Reformed Church, Oshawa, Ont.

ROOFTOP MUSINGS/ALYCE OOSTERHUIS

**In memoriam**

It is the sense of horror which I cannot shake off. The horror of trying to live those last moments as he experienced them: marvelling at the fearsome majesty of the tide's incoming fury when suddenly, with no warning, the waves engulfed and drew him in. I imagine his last words to be: Oh God! Oh Edith! and then no more. The waves continued to roll, majestic with their all-encompassing roars and murmurs.

At the time of this writing his body has been seen but not located. Thus we mourn, unable to bid a last, substantial farewell to a man whose presence so often undergirded and led the Christian community in Edmonton.

More than many others, it was Bill Sinnema who demonstrated that it is possible to have differences within the family of faith which do not polarize or lead to vindictive hate and hurt. We can disagree and yet still love each other. We can appreciate each other for all the little things that brighten our lives. We can listen in the quiet to God's voice calling us to celebrate, reach out, and enjoy.

Remembering little things

It is the little things which are embedded most vividly at this point in time: the relish of eating French onion soup for appetizer and dessert; the obstinate belief that a car has not matured to full capacity until it has clocked 100,000 kilometres; the praise for driving with ease and comfort; the quiet assurance with which he calibrated radar detectors with his tuning forks; the unabashed enjoyment of others' successes; the tug at the pipe as he contemplated what others were telling him.

A community asks: Why? Why him?; and these are questions which cannot be answered. In some sense they are the questions of our instinctive response to wish to have reasons for all that occurs. And reasons are intended to be logical, coherent, insightful. But there is so much in life that does not follow the dictates of logic and order. Bill's death cast its shadow on our Christmas celebrations; but how much more illogical was Christ's birth and subsequent suffering?

For his community and family, the questions are more fittingly: What now? How are we to work with the knowledge and experience of his absence?

Then it may be that we realize that the very suddenness of the loss creates a unique impact on our lives that cannot be contained and put away for future reference at some obscure point in time. The memory of his presence will be there at board and committee meetings. His hand on the gavel will continue to mold our hands into mutual handshakes after a heated debate. His empathy and concern for the dignity of others will be recalled as we visit with each other. His struggles and dismay will affect our discussions of goals and aims.

Bill Sinnema led a very humble, unassuming life as a faithfully strong, sanctifying leader in school and church. His death and disappearance do stir in our hearts the oft-recounted death and disappearance of the Christ who was given to us so many years ago. We celebrate Christ's birth, death, and resurrection daily. Yet for the disciples who experienced his death and resurrection, his ascension must have led to a renewed sense of loss and longing. In his memory and with this longing, they travelled far and dangerously to tell others. And as they shared and suffered, they longed for his return to a time when their tears would be wiped away by his loving hands and comforting hold.

And thus as we mourn we look with longing for Christ's presence to be with us here and now. May God grant us the comfort and the strength to live with the memory and longing for his Son's presence in our lives as we remember the life of one of his servants: Bill Sinnema.

Alyce Oosterhuis-Horzelberg is assistant professor of education at The King's College, Edmonton, Alberta.

Good news

Due to requests by many of our readers, we have asked William Rang and Leonard Schalkwyk to again write their columns for us. We are happy to report that they have consented to do so, and we are looking forward to the continuation of their writing. We all agree that different views of the Reformed community should be expressed freely.

Principal Rang's column can be found on page 6 of this issue. Pastor Schalkwyk's column will be back Feb. 24.

Editor

Letters**Heavenly kingdom demands our struggle**

I am writing in response to a "Longer Letter" written by Bert Hielema, which appeared in your January 6, 1989, issue. I found his criticism of the Christian Heritage Party of Canada a blow against an admirable organization. The CHP gets quite enough flak from secular newspapers.

One of the first statements made in the articles was the opinion that "a political party can only function when it seeks power. And to achieve this it must fight on the terms of the world." But the purpose of the CHP is not to establish an earthly kingdom. The CHP is instead providing a *Christian alternative* for the many who are disenchanted with the politicians who are supposed to represent them in the House of Commons.

The CHP is *not* going to compromise and "fight on the terms of the world." The CHP is fighting how God commanded us all to fight in Ephesians 6:12: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers in this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

God uses us

Mr. Hielema also stated that "the Kingdom has a force of its own," and the Father "for the time being, wills to deal with evil by forgiveness and letting it be." He asks, "Do we need a new

Christian political party to protect the Kingdom of God, which is actually God himself?"

I ask in return: "Doesn't God use us humans, imperfect as we are, to carry out his will in fighting against evil?" That is part of our office as kings. The Heidelberg Catechism (L.D. 12: Q&A 32) states that we are anointed, among other reasons, "to strive with a good conscience against sin and the devil in this life, and afterward to reign with Christ."

The third problem I found in Mr. Hielema's letter had to do with his declaration that the Kingdom is/always has been here, and that we must therefore realize that evil has been defeated. This is true, but Mr. Hielema fails to mention that the Kingdom is also *still to come*, as we pray in the Lord's Prayer.

The fact that the Kingdom has come is no excuse for us to sit back and let evil run rampant. Until Judgment Day, we must be witnessing as prophets, sacrificing our lives to Him as priests, but also striving against sin and the devil as kings.

The CHP is doing that. The Word of God calls us to action, and we must obey.

I hope you will receive my letter in the friendly spirit of correction that it is meant to convey.

Tamara N. Gritter
St. Catharines, Ont.

Being and loving is everything

Your news story about Henri Nouwen's speech at Redeemer (C.C. Jan. 27) struck a chord with me. The three things he learned from Adam are so crucial. I'd like to comment on the first two.

First he says, "Being is more important than doing." How many of us really believe that? We're often so busy proving things to ourselves and others that we forget everything is not up to us, but is sustained by God's gracious hand. The pressure to "do," and to be "a somebody" is very real.

Sometimes it is only when we feel total helplessness or desperation that we realize we are nothing, a nobody apart from the good gifts God gives us. For without his gracious care we would not even have life itself.

With that realization there comes a sense of freedom — in the first place, freedom from expectations which sometimes lead us to feel that our own gifts are not valid, whereas the gifts of other people are. Also, freedom from the expectations of others which can

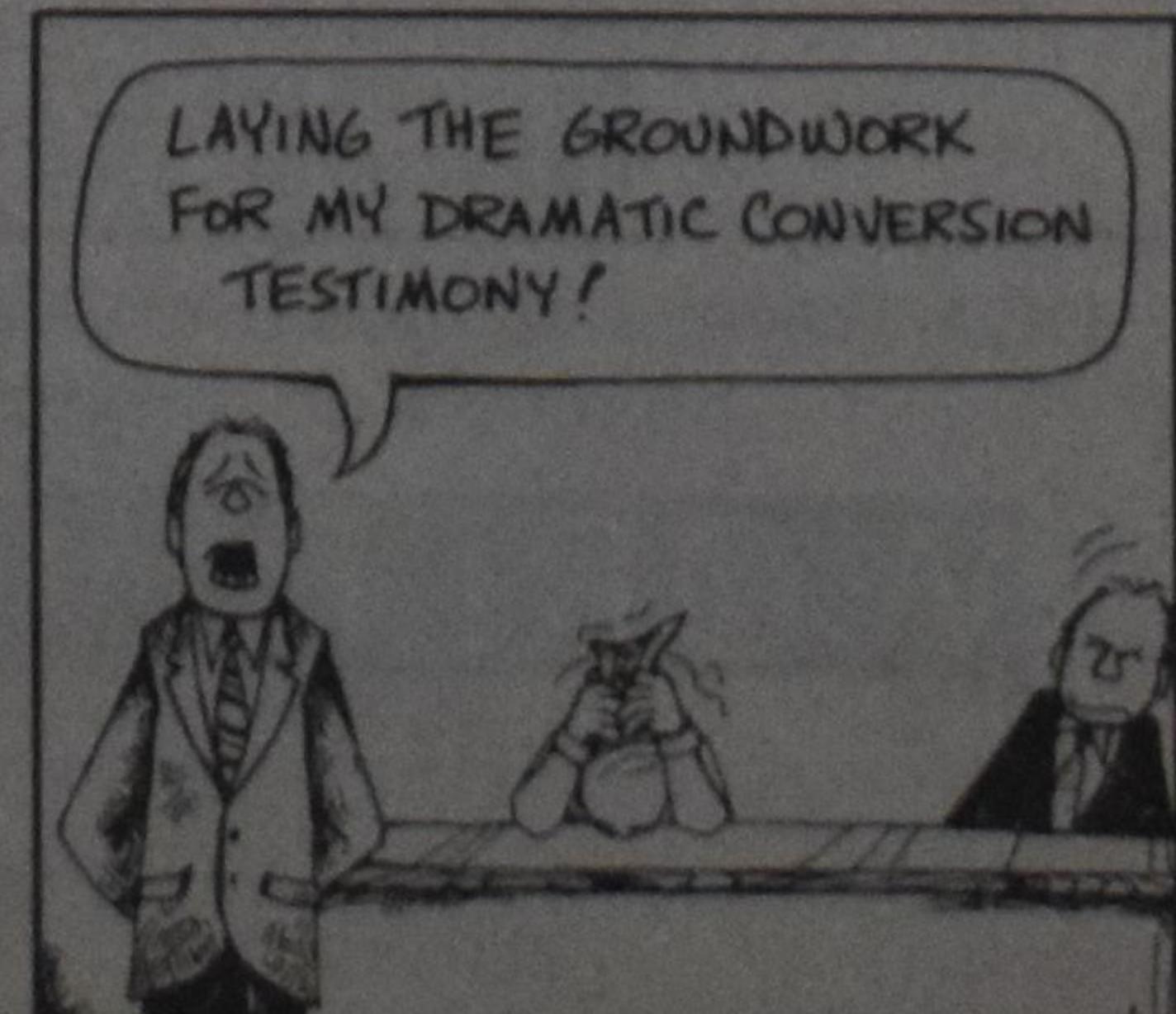
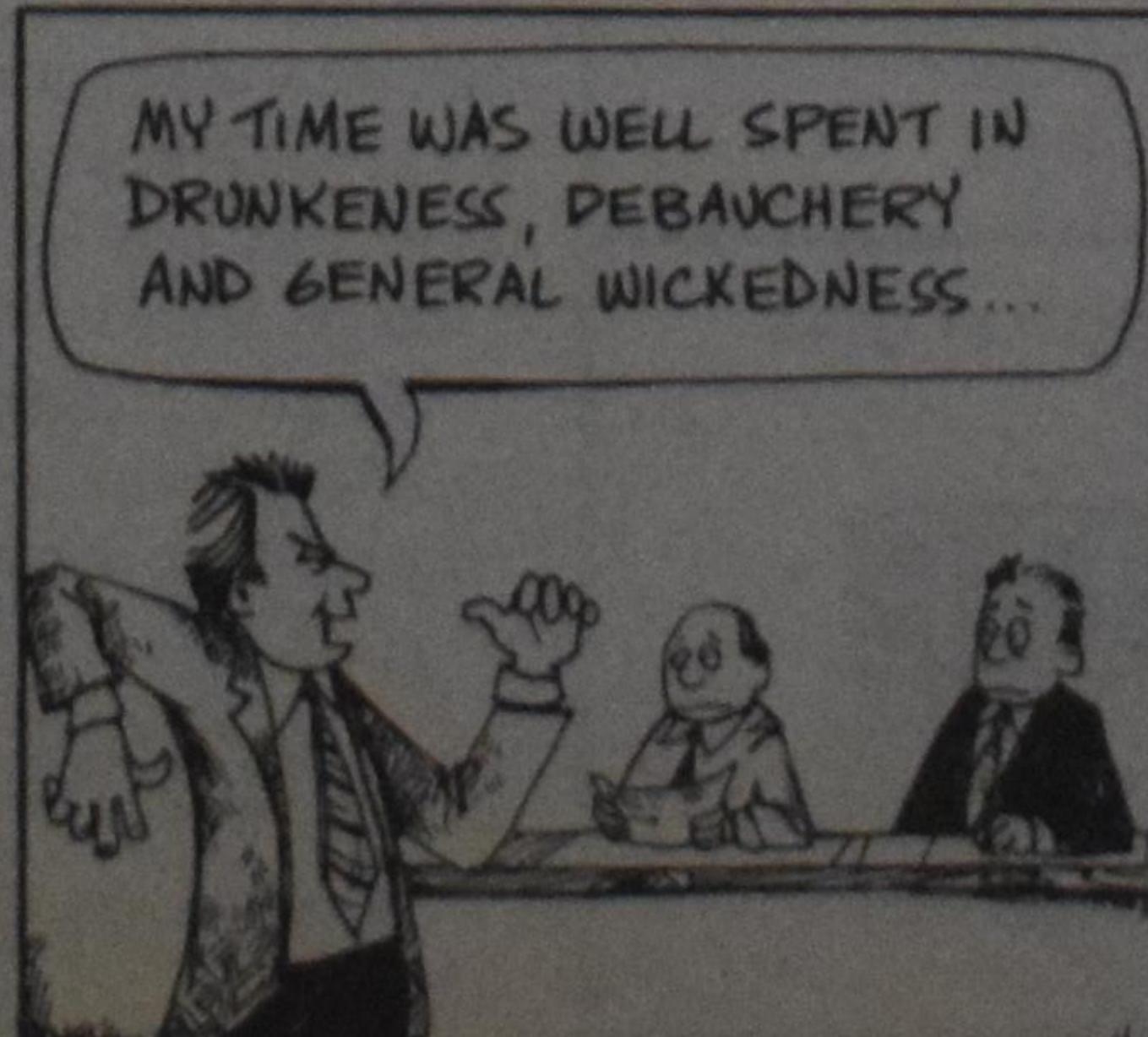
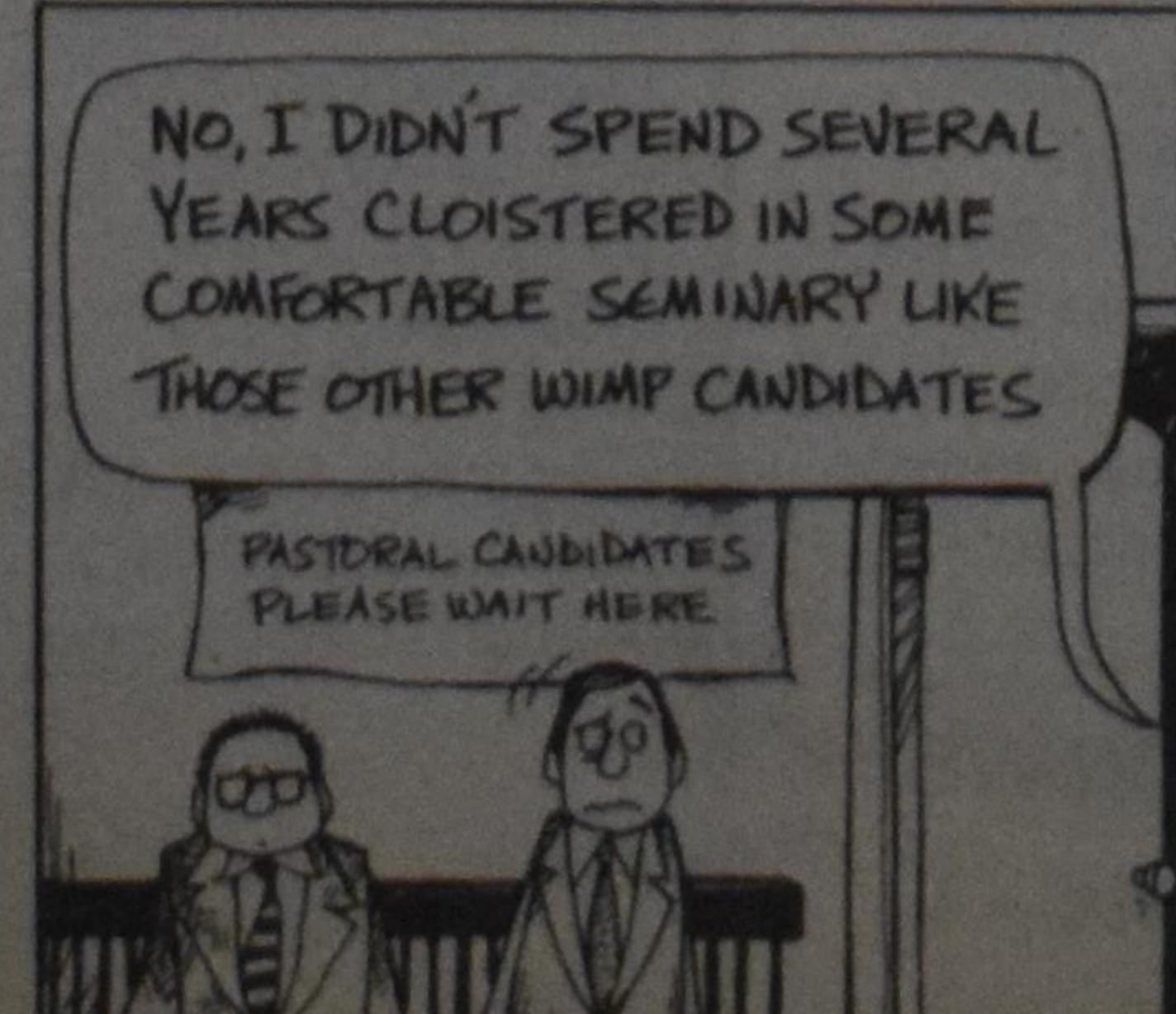
hem us in.

A tough act

Secondly, Nouwen states, "The heart is more important than the mind." That's a tough one to swallow for our technological, information-blitzed society. People, including many Christians, measure the success of their "doing" by the power of the intellect. Yet, the wholeness that we feel as people begins in the emotions. We show our greatest love for others when we expose the struggles and joys of our hearts, not the ticking of our brains.

Nouwen says, too, that he always heard two voices in his life. One saying, "Show me that you can do it"; the other, "It doesn't matter what you do as long as you keep loving Jesus." That struggle has also been mine for many years. To be a "somebody" can seem so important. But, when one strips all else away, "to be loving God in all things" is everything.

Sonya VanderVeen Feddeema
St. Catharines, Ont.

BEYOND BELIEF

ROSE ROSEN

Shaw Festival on way to big season

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, Ont. (SF) — The Shaw Festival announced last week that box office sales for the 1989 season have already surpassed \$1 million, far ahead of the theatre's estimated target for this time of year. Projected sales for the upcoming season are \$6.2 million.

The season begins previews April 26, opening with Bernard Shaw's comic masterpiece *Man & Superman*, and closes October 15.

Also playing at the Festival Theatre: *Berkeley Square*, by John L. Balderston, and *Once in a Lifetime*, by Moss Hart & George S. Kaufman.

The Royal George Theatre will host the murder mystery, *An inspector calls*, by J.B. Priestly. The musical this season is *Good News*, by Laurence Schwab, B.G. DeSylva, Lew Brown and Ray Henderson.

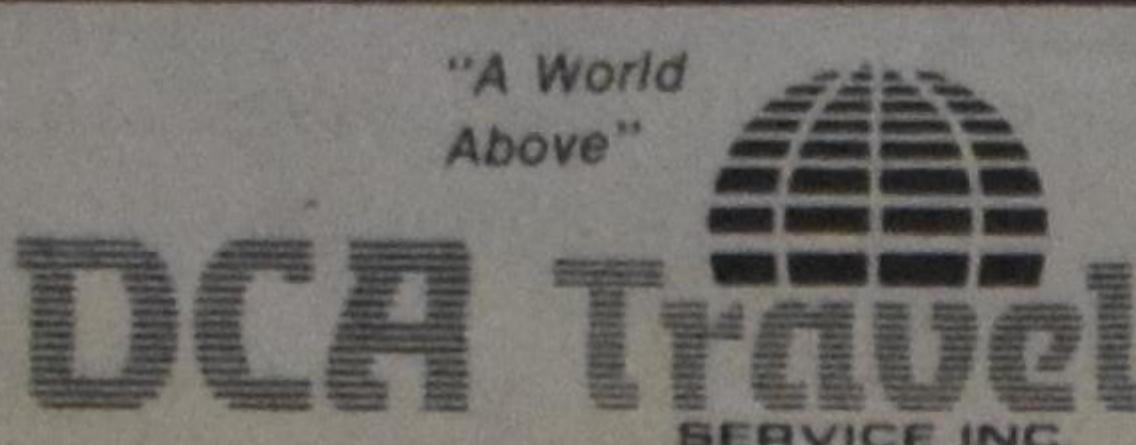
The "Challenges at the Court House" will feature



*Photo: Basic Drama Projects
The play, An Inspector Calls*

Shaw's comedy *Getting married*, and the Ibsen masterpiece, *Peer Gynt*. Lunchtime and "risk" presentations will also be offered. The late season opener at the Festival Theatre is *Trelawny of the 'Wells'*, by Arthur W. Pinero.

The Shaw Festival is one of Canada's best-known theatre festivals and draws audiences from all over Canada and the eastern and midwestern U.S.



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Lifestyles of Adventists may lengthen their lives

BOSTON, Mass. (EP) — The strict lifestyle of practising Seventh-day Adventists may help to extend their life spans, according to a study presented at the American Public Health Association's annual meeting.

Practising Seventh-day Adventists abstain from smoking and drinking alcoholic beverages. Many adopt a diet with little or no meat, and are strict on matters of weight and exercise.

"What we choose to do

makes a big difference on how long we live," explained Jan W. Kuzma, who conducted the study. Kuzma, a professor of vital statistics at Loma Linda University in California, continued, "This group has unique health practices, and since these are so highly associated with favourable outcomes, it points to the fact that what a person chooses to do by not smoking, by not overeating, and by exercising affects life expectancies."

Kuzma's research showed that a 35-year-old male Seventh-day Adventist was likely to live to age 82, nine years longer than average; a female Adventist was likely to live 7.6 years longer.

Kuzma acknowledged that there were questions about the reliability of the general population data to which the Seventh-day Adventist group was compared. Loma Linda University is affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Where's the action in town?

Bert Witvoet

During a lively discussion on the state of Christian politics in Canada, one Christian Reformed person said that he would refuse to sign a petition on Sunday shopping if the argument were stated in religious terms, if Sunday were presented as a Sabbath or the day of the Lord. His reason was based on the fear that, with the influx into Canada of immigrants and refugees with other religions, Christians will one day be a minority. At such a time the practice of imposing religious values on others would come back to haunt us, he said.

Other members of the group said that most lobby groups against Sunday opening of stores base their position on the need for a "common pause day." This common day of rest would allow families to regroup and retail workers to have a day off when most others are also not working. But the one member was not so sure that the push for a legislated Sabbath observance was dead.

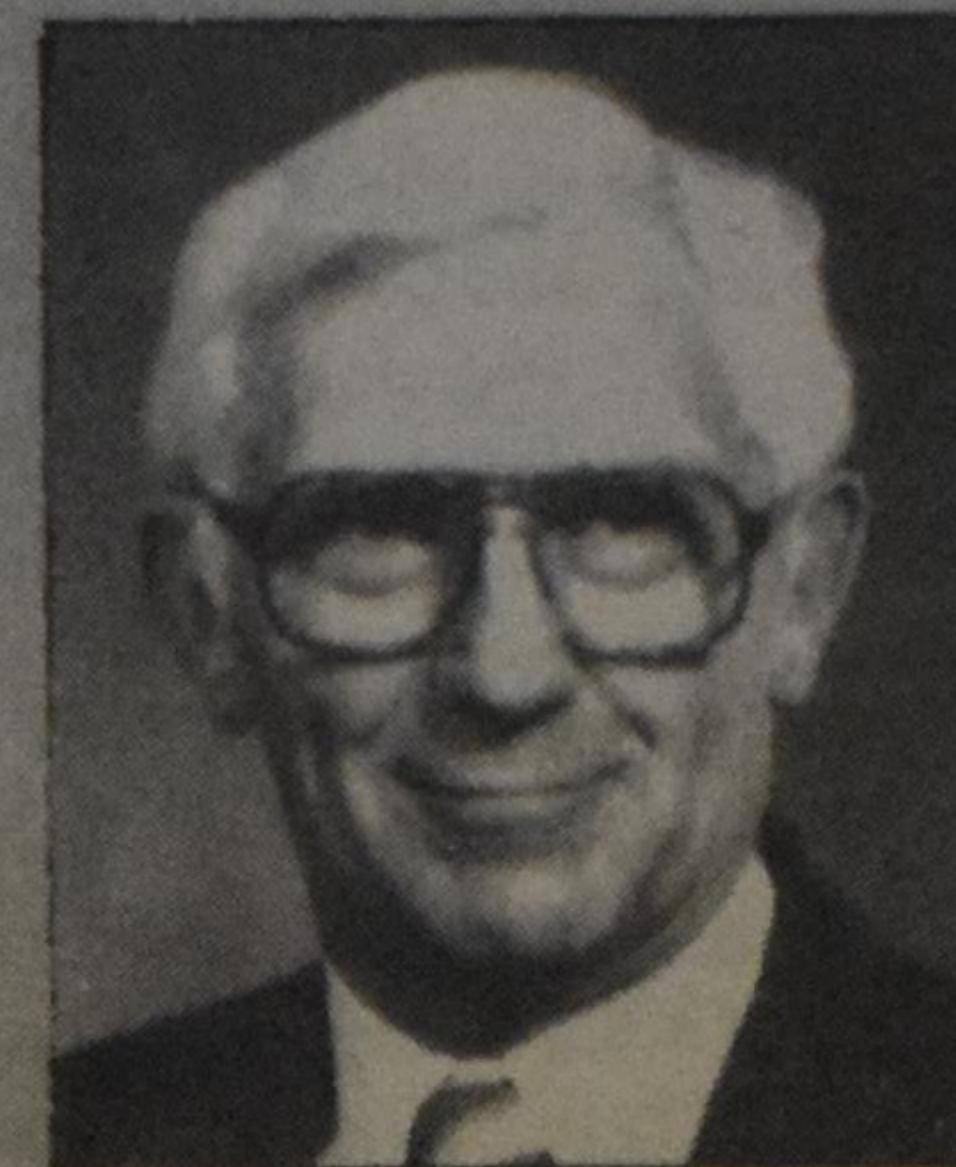
"Pretty soon Christians will legislate non-Christians' going to church," he said. The others protested. Undaunted the lone cynic painted the following picture.

"Think of the city of Toronto under the ban of Sunday closing laws for all establishments," he said. "Now imagine a tourist stepping off the bus on a Sunday at the Bay depot and walking over to a cab, asking him where the action is. Zoom, the cab takes him to First Toronto Christian Reformed Church. See what I mean?"

The group fell silent. No one could argue against this spirited rebuke of the establishment of religion.

Church news returns next week

SKYLIGHTS/WILLIAM R. RANG



He is holy

Church services are slowly changing from God meeting with his people to people who meet to feel good about themselves.

More than a year after the funeral of my mother in the Netherlands I received a tape of the service. As I listened to it, I had to fight back the tears.

Mom. When she was young, she was a girl of great beauty. She was a talented singer and musician. In her early teens she was the organist of her church.

Her marriage changed her from a rather self-conscious lady to one who sacrificed herself for her husband and six sons. They were her challenge and her mandate. She realized full-well that the Lord had given her quite a task. This was evident especially on Saturdays when she made preparations for the Lord's Day.

Shirts were ironed and starched, shoes polished, suits hung ready. The monies for the church collection would lie ready on the dining room buffet; and the peppermints, too.

When Mom entered church, the next day, she wiped her feet long and vigorously. Once in her seat, she sat up very straight. Both Mom and Dad made sure we did, too. No slouching. God is in his holy temple.

Yes, to my mom, going to church was meeting with God. We had to look our best. And Mom made sure that we all sang and followed the scripture readings. Yes, in church we met with our God. The service was one of awe, of reverence.

Things have changed. Church services are slowly changing from God meeting with his people to a people who meet to feel good about themselves.

I talk and yap the whole day. I hear my own voice throughout my waking hours. Professionally, I am busy with the Kingdom as a school principal. Frankly, on Sundays I want to listen. I want to put myself into the presence of the Lord. "Be still and know that I am God": the Lord is holy.

When we say that he is holy, we mean that he is absolutely distinct from all his creatures and is exalted above them in infinite majesty. When I am in church, I want to enjoy the fact that I am but very small in his holy presence. I want to be quiet to let him speak. Going to church is going to a feast, not to a human party. Thus, when I am in church, I want to feel small and realize his holiness. Then I feel warm all over. I just hope that you feel the same way.

William R. Rang is principal of Dunnville Christian School, Dunnville, Ont.

Forgive and teach us

*With the whole creation
we wait for the purifying fire of judgment.*

*In our arrogance and pride we have
grabbed what was not ours
and abused what was entrusted
to us only for safekeeping.*

*We have taken your name and dishonoured it
we have flouted your fixed order and
in wilful defiance and deliberate ignorance
have shut our ears to the pleading of your people
and the groaning of your creation.*

*Forgive us for breaking your covenant
for enslaving the poor of the earth and
unloading on them our paper moneys created out of
nothing by our banking magic and now demanding back
their blood.*

*Forgive us for breaking your covenant
We have paved your planet with our greed for speed
and our need for escape from ourselves
and now we have upset the laws of creation at our
peril.*

*Forgive us for breaking your covenant
We have done business to enrich ourselves
at the expense of creatures and creation and now
have imprisoned our souls and imperiled the cosmos*

*Teach us Lord to live again
to live the true life of joy and peace
of loving you as you want to be loved
of loving others and ourselves as you want us to.*

*Teach us to live the true life of joy and peace and justice
as your covenant children
a life of obedience
of truly responding to your word
your laws in creation your word in Jesus Christ and
your Spirit in us*

*So that we can prepare ourselves to live
the full life of your new creation
when we have become what we are
when we will see you as you really are
when all our hurts are healed
all our wars ended all church walls gone
the Bible be no more your word be in our hearts
when everything in earth and in the starry expanse
will be made new
when Justice will reign and each eye will see at last
that this world belongs to God.*

Bert Hielema
Tweed, Ont.

The Waiting Snake

*The very first victim to fall was the great grandfather of all
who slide on their bellies through grass.*

*It really presents no surprise: for the devils hate and despise
all that God has created first-class.*

*(... the serpent was more subtle than any other creature that the Lord God had
made.)*

*Now the symbol of loathing and fear, he is shunned by all who come near,
he's cursed above all in the field.*

*How do you think it must constantly feel to be considered the ultimate heel
of all that creation can yield?*

*All that exists cries out with pained voice, but above all the noise
you can hear the hiss of the snake.*

*He longs for that still hidden day when the Son will hold glorious sway,
having paid for all sin on the stake.*

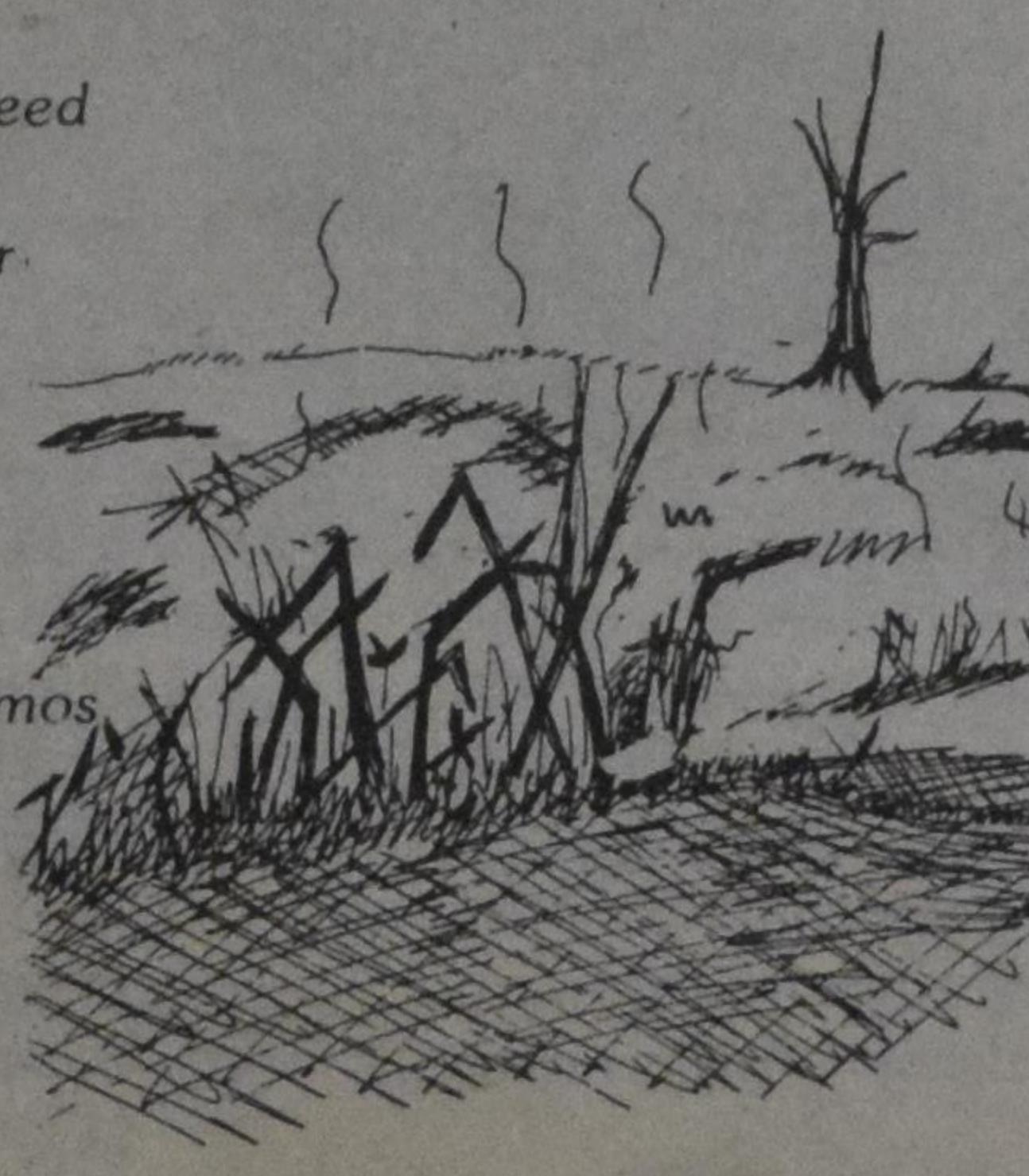
*(... the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons
of God.)*

*On a new earth where all will be light, with long days never turning to night,
He shall frolic and bask in the sun.*

*And a baby will laugh with delight as she places her hands on his side,
and tickles his skin with her own.*

*(... the sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned
child shall put his hand on the adder's den.)*

And the snake shall have peace.



Spring burning

The field next door lay white as death.

*All winter long
snow pods entombed the hidden weeds
that waited for a stronger light.
We saw them now,
bent and brittle, empty stalks;
heard their thin voices,
rude in the breathing warmth of spring.*

*Our father judged the hour and the day.
His sure and solid steps
led to an end, from where the wind began.
His workman's hands loosened
a cluster from the soil, shaped a rough tower with broken girders.
he fumbled with his lighter, shielded the wind
with his big-shouldered body. His pursed lips
blew fire into fury. He drew that fury
in a racing line
across the field;
and, emulating what we saw, we danced to torch
with retributive zeal, all that was stark and brown.*

*Hot flames, with snake-tongued twists,
spat mushroom clouds.
The twins, in heedless frenzy,
ran flame in unsure paths
and ended, huddled back-to-back, white-eyed.
the circle closing wildly into them.
Their convoluted wailing mingled with my mother's shrieks.
Our father swung potato sacks in wild abandon,
parted the sea, another miracle of power,
pinioned them under iron wings
and vaulted the fire.
His boots trampled the stubble
into dusty clouds, his laughter echoed like rolling thunder.
"Wees meer voorzichtig!"*

*I held my breath as mother wrung
her hands, fearing we would be banished
to the ignominy of watching
from behind white picket boards,
but he, purposely or not, missed
mother's fear in the orange-walled roaring
of the moment.*

*All too soon, it was done.
Our father left for other work. We loitered
stalking wisps of curling smoke, savouring
the after-smell of burning that is
like no other smell at all, replaying for
our memories, the sharp intensity of fire.*

*I kicked a blackened clump of grass. The field
was pitted with these
tufts; its powdering apart
revealed a huddled group, wonderfully
clustered against a mother, unformed
remnants of baby mice; again, again their
silence testified to the finality of fire.*

*I refused to help with the spring burning again.
When I tried to explain, impatience
and perplexity roughened my dad's voice:
"The fire brings the green grass early, clean and even;
Mice are a pest in autumn time."*

*I see but darkly into
deep and secret
places often clouded by our
childish eyes. I know my
Father less as an avenging angel
fiery sword in hand;
more as the careful workman
still fashioning the mystery,
His precious thoughts still
weaving out of darkness, light.
There are so many nests within
the dying field.*

A. Maat-Heidings
Ingersoll, Ont.

News

Calgary church offers new life to Vietnamese family



Jeff Adams

The six-year search for a country to call home has finally ended for Van Tai Truong and his family.

The 24-year-old former motorcycle mechanic arrived in Calgary in September, accompanied by his wife, Thi Dan, and their three children, after living in a Hong Kong refugee camp since 1982.

They were met at Calgary airport by members of Emmanuel Christian Reformed Church, a 190-family congregation that spent almost a year winning the Vietnamese family's release from a fenced compound.

Emmanuel Church is one of several hundred non-government organizations that will sponsor refugees this year.

The people they bring into Canada from troubled places around the world are in addition to the 13,000 refugees that Ottawa is sponsoring.

Emmanuel members have accepted responsibility for the Truongs for the next 12 months.

They've already provided the young family with a place of their own, including furniture, bedding, clothes and toys.

Health care and language training have been arranged, and Tai has a full-time job in

the construction industry.

"I'm very happy to be in Canada," he said in a telephone interview from his new home in southwest Calgary. My life is settled."

Years passed

Nothing was settled in early 1982 when Tai and Thi Dan fled Vietnam.

They became boat people, joining more than 200,000 of their countrymen who escaped by risking their lives on the high seas.

When the young couple arrived at the Hong Kong refugee camp in May 1982, they assumed it would take only a

few months for their papers to be processed and a sponsor to come forward.

They hoped to join Tai's brother in California. But American officials, like those in other countries where refugee regulations were tightening, said no.

Months passed. Then years.

"I began to be afraid we would never leave," Tai recalled in halting English.

Camp authorities eventually became more trusting and allowed longtime residents like Tai to leave the fenced compound each day for jobs in local factories.

His wife stayed behind to

care for their children, now aged, one, two and six, as each was born into a world of crowded captivity.

Word of the Truongs' plight finally reached the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, which added them to a list of refugees for which it recruits churches as sponsors.

Sponsorship out of gratitude

The Emmanuel congregation submitted its sponsorship application last November — and finally gave the Truongs hope of a new life.

Deb De Graff, in whose home Tai and his family stayed for their first three days in Calgary, said she and other members of her congregation see refugee sponsorship as a way to say thanks to God for what he's given them.

"I expect to get as much out of this as they (the Truongs) do," DeGraff said.

Tai wants to become financially independent as quickly as possible. That way, he said, groups like Emmanuel Church can go on to sponsor more refugees — including many he left behind in the crowded camps of Hong Kong.

Reprinted from the *Calgary Herald*.



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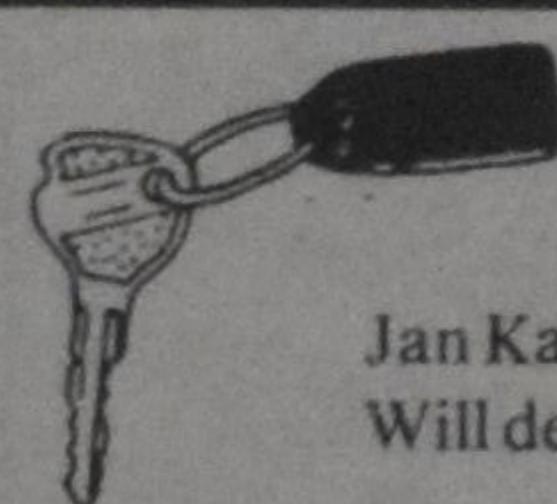
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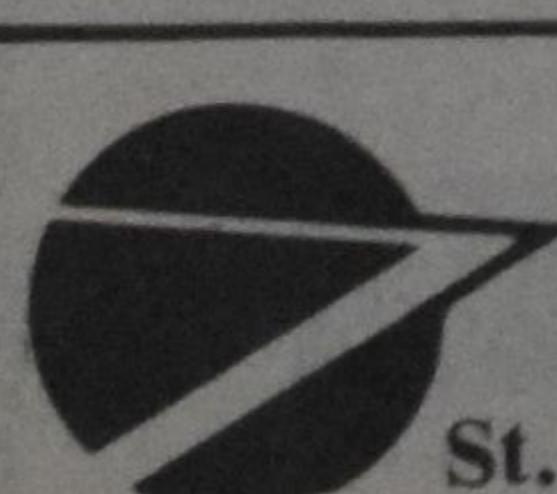
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Christian farmers plead need for continued interest rate help

GEORGETOWN, Ont. (CFFO) — The need for interest rate assistance for almost one third of Ontario's family farms is still urgent according to the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO).

In a pre-budget letter to

Provincial Treasurer, Robert Nixon, the Federation says it is absolutely necessary to replace the Ontario Family Farm Interest Rate Reduction program with a similar better targeted program that will cost less.

The CFFO letter proposes a

35 per cent rebate on all debt servicing costs, including both principle and interest. The CFFO wants to encourage entrepreneurs to shop for the best interest rate and to tackle the urgent need to reduce debts.

The program would be much less expensive than OFFIRR if

those with 50 per cent or more equity get reduced benefits, the letter suggests.

CFFO also called on Nixon to establish a capital grants program to maintain or improve the agroecology.

"Our very productive farming system puts pressure on the

environment that over time can lead to serious degradation," the letter says. "On our family farms, measures to protect the environment, improve animal welfare or develop alternative farming systems often cannot be financed from current cash flow."

CFFO is on the verge of giving up all hope that the federal government will return the Farm Credit Corporation to its former effectiveness.

"We request that you establish a public inquiry on the need for Ontario to establish a long-term lending agency to agriculture and the rural economy," the letter says.

Disabled Mennonites gather in Winnipeg

WINNIPEG, Man. (MCC) — Under the theme "Christian Solidarity for Disabled People Around the World," over 250 disabled people are expected to gather in Winnipeg in 1990 prior to the Mennonite World Conference in Manitoba.

The gathering, organized by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Disabled People's Concerns (DPC), will take place July 20-22, 1990, at the Canadian Mennonite Bible College.

Says Henry Enns, Director of DPC: "I'm really excited by this conference. We hope to have at least one representative from every country where there are Mennonites and Brethren in Christ."

The gathering will focus on three areas: deafness, developmental disabilities and physical disabilities. Sessions dealing with interests and issues arising from each area will be held. Topics that will be discussed by all will include Supportive Care in the Congregation, A Theology for Disabled People, Becoming the Caring Community and Accessibility in Developing Countries. Other sessions will feature drama, signed music and poetry, singing and other artistic expressions by the participants.

Exhibits and displays will highlight achievements by disabled people since 1984, when the last Mennonite World Conference was held. "This promises to be a world-wide showcase for achievements and advancements," says Enns.

One of the suggestions for the gathering is a "Great Trek" style of travel, with participants travelling together from East and West to Winnipeg. DPC is seeking support to enable delegates from developing countries to attend.

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Features

A new Russian revolution?

David T. Kooyzis

Late last year, at the initiative of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, the infamous Supreme Soviet, long known in the west as a "rubber-stamp" assembly, abolished itself and created in its place what could become an effective parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies. While the predecessor body met only a few days out of the year and did no more than ratify decisions made by the Communist Party, the new body is supposed to be a continuously-sitting parliament, along western lines, with effective powers to debate and decide on national issues.

As if that were not enough, during his visit to New York and the United Nations, Gorbachev pledged a unilateral reduction in Soviet conventional forces by half a million men. The government of the Estonian republic (which was forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union by Stalin in 1940) has claimed the right to nullify Soviet constitutional amendments with which it disagrees. Poland is moving to legalize the independent Solidarity trade union. And Hungary plans to permit the establishment of opposition parties later this year.

What's going on? And what are we to make of all this? A year or two ago, such events would have been unthinkable.

Just an interlude

There are two ways to look at recent developments. On the one hand, they may simply be part of a liberalizing phase in the seemingly endless cyclical pattern of repression and relaxation which is so much a part of Russian/Soviet history. If this is indeed the case, then we can expect a clamp-down to come sooner or later. Either Gorbachev himself will do this or someone else will do so after pushing Gorbachev aside.

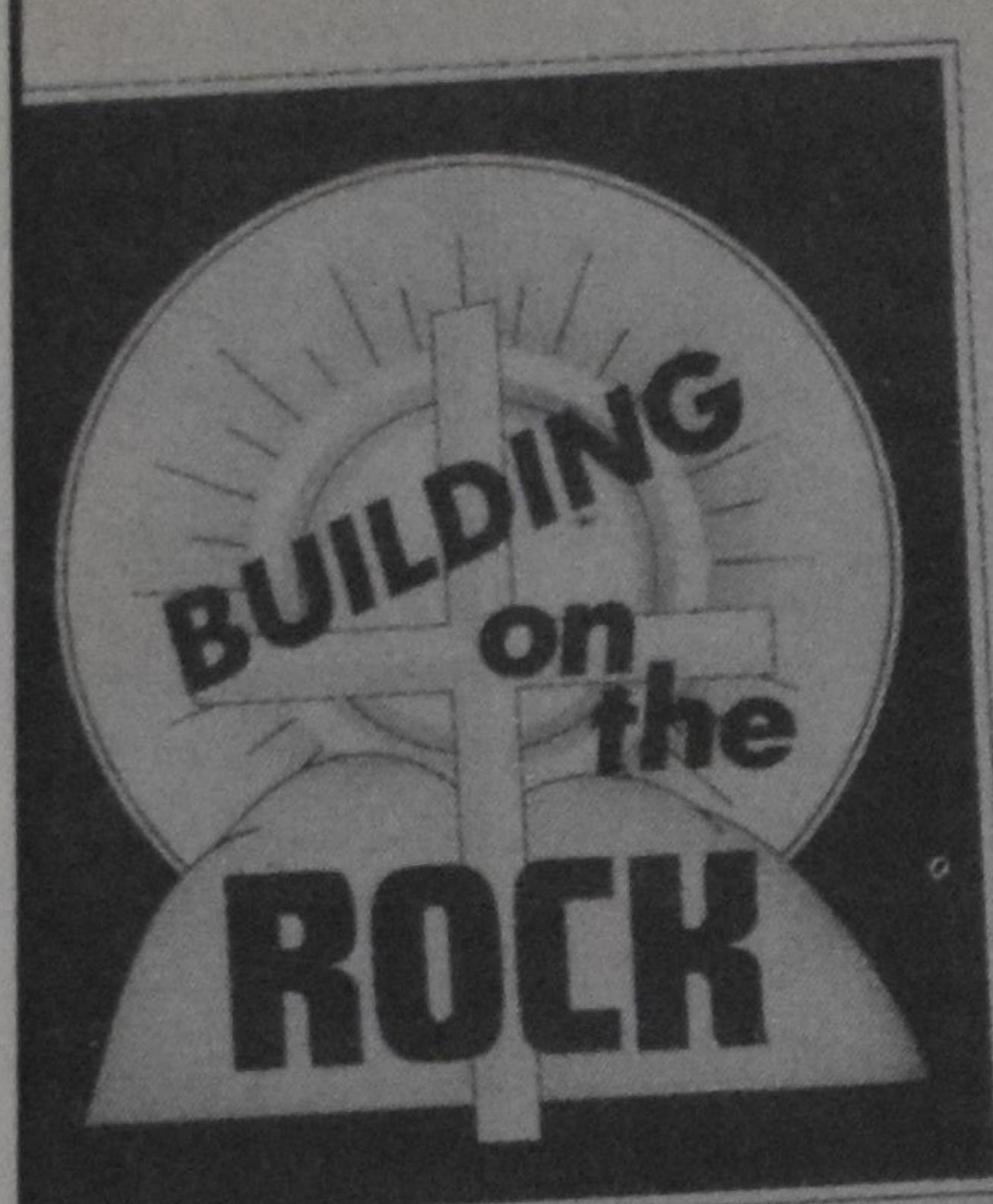
Perhaps Gorbachev will prove to be another Alexander I, the early 19th-century Russian tsar who began his reign with promises of liberalization but moved back in the direction of autocracy and reaction. Or it may be that



Photo: Sherbell/Picture Group
Signs of freedom visible on Moscow streets.

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another Brezhnev-like figure will come along and put the brakes on these reforms by ridding the country of Gorbachev himself.

On the other hand, we may find that the long "reign" of Brezhnev was simply holding up history and that, once he was out of the way, the inexorable move towards destalinization, begun by Khrushchev, and the long delayed entry of the Soviet Union into the 20th-century could finally continue. According to this interpretation, Gorbachev and his reformist allies have belatedly come to realize that

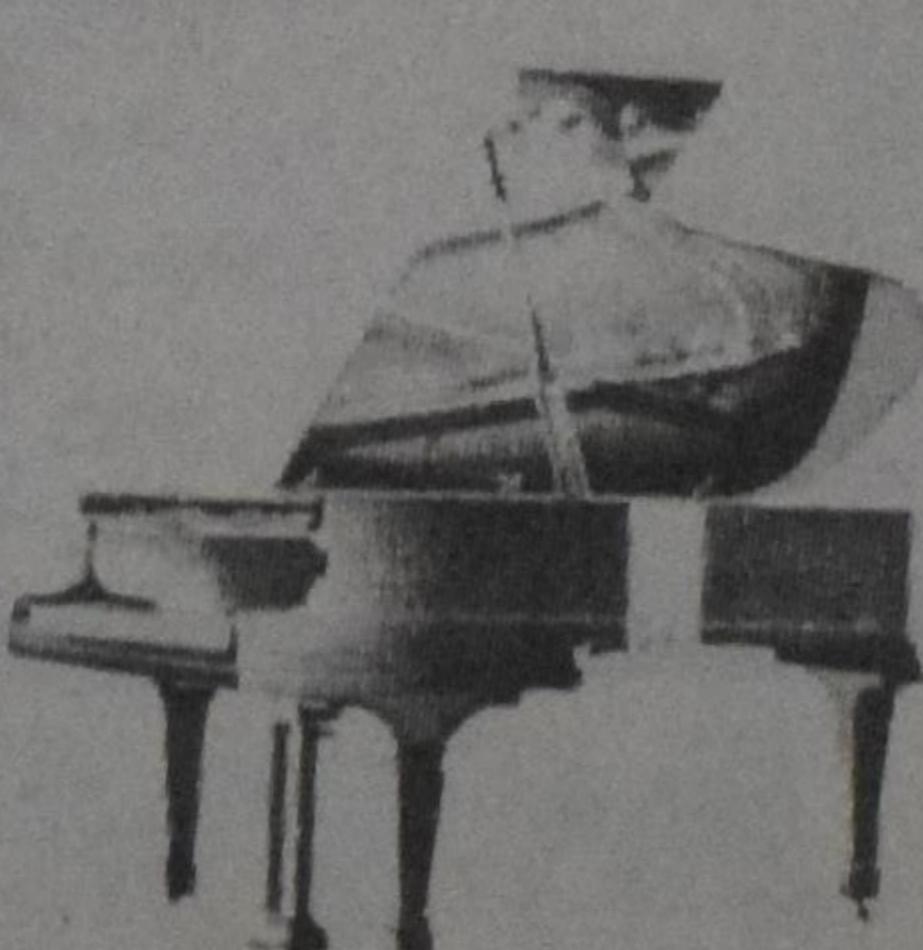
huge defence expenditures, a costly war in Afghanistan, and other imperial ventures around the globe are draining the Soviet economy and must be cut back or eliminated accordingly.

Trying to second-guess the Soviet Union is obviously a precarious business. Appearances may be entirely deceiving and we have little way of seeing through such deceptions. It is, of course, possible that the current reforms are simply a ruse and that the Soviet empire really is plotting to catch the western democracies off-guard and will soon be back in all its

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totalitarian ferocity. This is what the ideological anticommunists have been telling us all along.

The hazards of decentralization

But let us assume for the sake of argument that Gorbachev is really serious about wishing to reform the archaic and brittle institutions of his country's government. He still faces a paradox inherent in any attempt at reform in such a system.

The success of Gorbachev's efforts depends on his ability to keep a firm hand on the wheel and to fend off possible threats to his leadership. Yet, the ultimate direction of his reforms is towards greater decentralization of political and economic power. In other words, a push towards democracy requires, as well as endangers, the continuation of autocratic control. The fact that Gorbachev has established a Congress of People's Deputies which is not merely ancillary to the Communist party means that someone else will presumably have the power (at the very least) to call into question his proposals.

Two questions are worth thinking about. First, are we finally witnessing the breakup of the Russian Empire and the more-or-less monolithic communist system which has governed it for the last 70 years? At this point, I am inclined to say that we are not. In the larger course of human history, 70 years is not a long time, and there have been despotic imperial systems which have endured for many centuries. Events may, of course, prove me wrong in this conclusion.

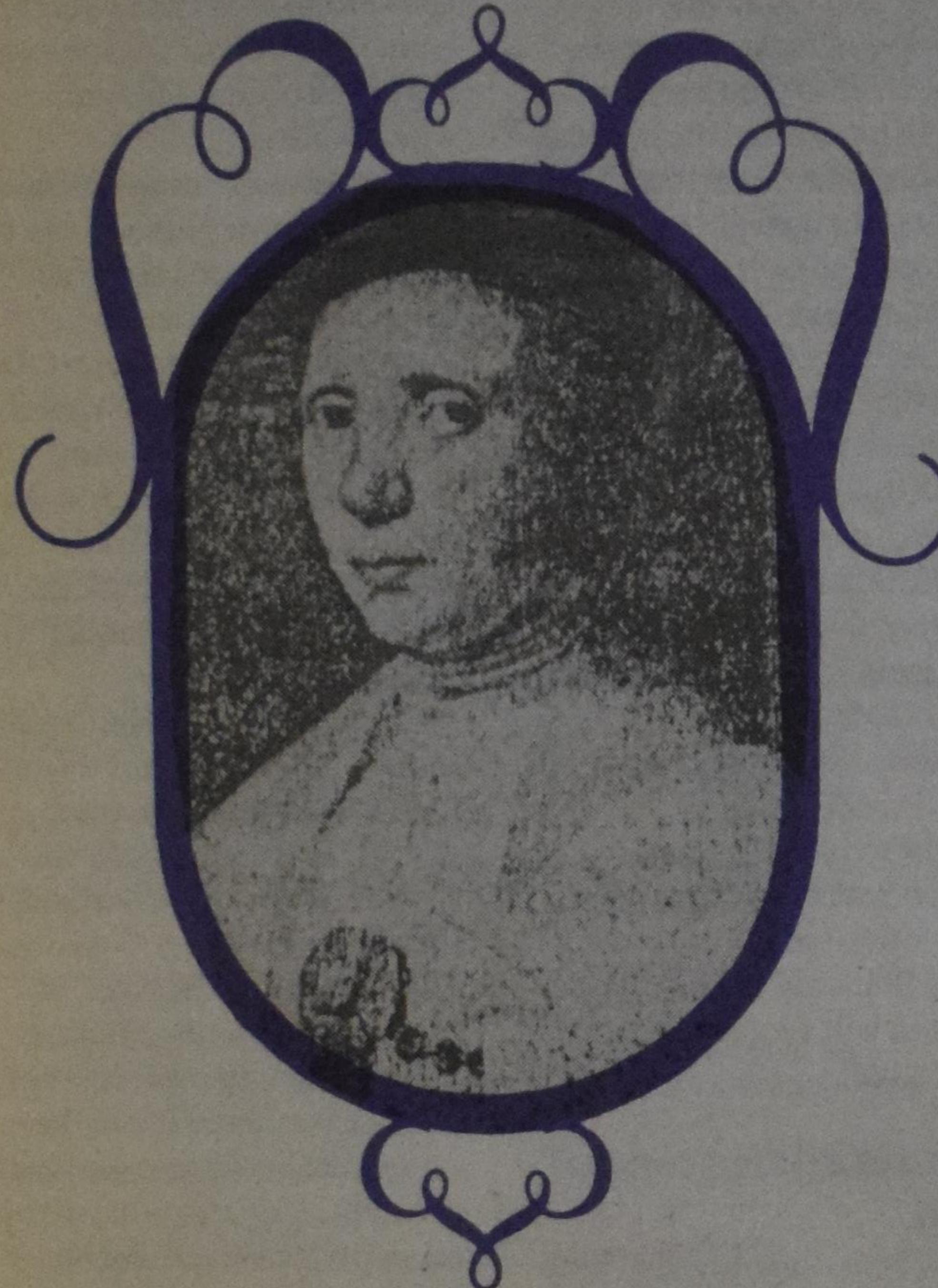
Second, should we want to see such a breakup? My initial response is to say that indeed we should. As a Christian I would like especially to see our fellow believers in the communist countries be able to live in peace and freedom.

But there are also hazards. After nearly 45 years of the post-war era, we have become rather used to the world being divided into only two or three spheres of influence. And although Soviet adventurism has either caused or capitalized on instability throughout the third world, Soviet hegemony in eastern Europe has effectively put an end to the festering Balkan question which plunged Europe and the world into war so frequently between 1821 and 1945.

A loosening of the Soviet grip on its vast empire may usher in a rather different and more unsettling world than the one we have known over the last generation or two.

David T. Kooyzis is associate professor of political science at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.

A sister in the faith: Anna Maria van Schuurman



Barthie Knoppers and Joanna Romyn Vos

At a "Partnership in the Gospel" conference sponsored by the Committee for Women in the Christian Reformed Church, keynote speaker Dr. Richard Mouw challenged his audience to "know your mothers and sisters" in the faith. Mouw's comment followed his brief mention of several women who, at various intervals in Reformed history, lived noteworthy lives of faith. As a biblical precedent, Mouw highlighted his challenge with the image of Joshua telling the Israelites to "take up stones ... as a signpost ... so that when the children ask their meaning ... they may be a memorial for ever." (Joshua 4:4-7) This article about Anna Maria van Schuurman (1607-1678), addresses Mouw's challenge in a small way and "takes up a stone ... to help us and our children remember" our mothers and sisters in the faith.

Anna Maria van Schuurman's prominence and uniqueness is apparent when one considers the post-Renaissance age in which she lived and exercised her varied talents. Throughout her life, this remarkable woman etched out a memorable witness to her Creator and Redeemer. Generations of Christians who affirm that women and men together are called to actively serve the Lord will be encouraged by the gifts, perseverance and service displayed throughout the life of Anna Maria van Schuurman who was born in Cologne, West Germany.

Had Anna Maria van Schuurman been born to an average peasant family, it is doubtful that she would have developed into a scholar. Rather, she was born to Frederick and Eva van Schuurman who were members of the affluent Dutch nobility at a time when the Netherlands (United Provinces as they were then called), was enjoying the "Golden Age" — an era of unparalleled prosperity, influence and cultural achievement.

Since only the clergy and the privileged nobilities of Europe had access to education during

the 17th century, the van Schuurman's affluence opened a door for Anna Maria which remained closed for all but a few of her female contemporaries. When the religious and political tensions of the day made it too dangerous for a dissident Reformed family to remain in Cologne, the van Schuurmans moved to Utrecht in the Netherlands where supporters of the "New Teaching" (the 17th century name for the Reformed Church) could live in relative security from Roman Catholic persecution. It was in Utrecht that Anna Marie van Schuurman's remarkable gifts became obvious.

Already as a child Anna Maria had demonstrated some unique talents. At the age of three, she could read and quote parts of the Heidelberg Catechism. At four, her artistic gifts began to show through the intricate embroidery and cut-outs which she created. (Cut-outs were a noted 17th century art form). Her father noticed his daughter's unusual talents and strongly encouraged her to develop them. The private tutor employed by the family to give instruction to Anna Maria's brother observed that Anna Maria's self-learning

outdistanced her brother's guided education. By the age of 11, she was fluent in Latin. (In later years, Anna Maria was regarded as the most knowledgeable Latin scholar in Utrecht). In addition, she taught herself Hebrew, Spanish, Italian, Arabic, Ethiopian, and Greek. Besides her prowess in languages, she developed a vast knowledge of geography, philosophy, botany and medicine. She was invited to join the St. Luke Guild (a society of artists in Utrecht) because she was also an avid painter, and sculpted in wax, ivory and wood. She continued her skilful embroidery and cut-out art which she had begun as a child. In music, Anna Maria sang, played the lute, violin and cembalo (an early keyboard instrument).

In order to create opportunities for his daughter's exceptional abilities, Frederick van Schuurman introduced Anna to several prominent Dutch scholars of the day. This proved to be just the beginning of her extensive association and correspondence with the noteworthy scholars and nobility of the time. Throughout Europe, it was common for thinkers to form societies within which they worked. As groups and individuals, they frequently discussed scientific problems and new ideas by letter. Such correspondence contributed significantly to a person's scholarly development. Membership in such a group was a privilege reserved for only the most prominent male scholars and it was to such an association that Anna Maria was invited.

Among her contemporaries were Dutch scholars such as Christian Huygens, the secretary of the Council of State in 1600; Rivet (1572-1651), a theologian and professor at the University of Leiden; Jacob Cats (1577-1660), a poet and statesman; and Gijsbert Voetius (1589-1676), another theologian, professor and writer. The most renowned of her associates was René Descartes (1596-1650), the French philosopher known as the "father of 17th century rationalism." In addition, her friendship circle included the queens of Sweden and Poland with whom she visited and socialized. In fact, so highly regarded was Anna Maria, that she was called the "Tenth Muse" — a reference to Greek mythology which named nine goddesses or muses who presided over literature, the arts and the sciences.

With all these varied gifts, Anna Maria seemed to be a female prototype of the glorified so-called "Renaissance Man." One

could certainly safely assume that Anna Maria must have enjoyed and profited from such lavish esteem and distinguished company.

In addition to the elite company she kept, Anna Maria also had the distinction of being the first woman in the history of the Netherlands to attend a university. Because women of that age were considered basically inferior to men and not equipped for academic pursuits, Anna Maria's attendance at the university required the preparation of a special room for her. A panel was cut out of the lecture room wall to allow her to see and hear the professor. She was, however, hidden from the view of her fellow male students since her presence was considered a distraction for the male students! One can only speculate as to the extent of the resistance which Anna Maria experienced as a woman while involved in activities which were considered the exclusive domain of men.

Surely life was not easy for her as an anomaly. Even though her wealth may have opened doors for her, it obviously did not change the societal norms for the role of 17th century women.

However, undaunted by the restrictive attitude toward women of the times, Anna Maria took it upon herself to promote the right of women to pursue an education. She wrote a booklet entitled *The Learned Maid* or "*Whether a Maid May Also be a Scholar*" which was translated into English in 1659. Anna Maria's supporters published her other works under the title *Opuscula* which is Latin for "small works." Despite the strong arguments for her cause which she advanced through theses such as "God didn't create in women the urge to study without any purpose" and "Ignorance and being uninformed doesn't suit a Christian woman," the doors of the universities did not swing open to the women of the day. However, in 1636, Anna Maria was honoured by her friend and contemporary, Gijsbert Voetius, when he asked her to write a Latin hymn of thanksgiving for the opening of the University of Utrecht.

In 1623, Anna Maria's father died. At her father's deathbed, Anna Maria promised that she would never marry. One wonders why such a knowledgeable father who had encouraged his gifted daughter at every juncture would extract this commitment from her. Perhaps it was because Frederick van Schuurman envisioned that marriage for Anna would create great obstacles for the continuation of her scholarly work, or, perhaps he sensed

that her unusual gifts and talents might make a contented conventional marriage in the 1620's an impossibility.

Both of these views are sheer speculation, but as already explained, history documents that for a considerable period of time following her father's death, Anna Maria exercised her superior intellectual abilities in association with other famous scholars and created for herself a lasting reputation during the Dutch Golden Age.

In reflection, one can hardly imagine a 17th century woman wanting or attaining more prestige and status than Anna Maria van Schuurman had achieved by 1650. However, in reviewing Anna Maria's life, one is truly amazed to see her set aside all her possessions, wealth and status to selflessly pursue a simple obedient Christian life. This "simple obedient Christian life" is not to suggest that Anna Maria's faith and involvement in the church had not always been an important part of her life. Her scholarly work in Reformed theology was well known and often referred to by others. But when she came in contact with Jean de Labadie, a dynamic preacher, Anna Maria van Schuurman's life changed forever and her uniqueness became even more graphic than what it was at the peak of her scholarly achievements.

Jean de Labadie (1610-1674) was a Roman Catholic priest who had come in contact with the "new" Reformed faith and had taken hold of it. After becoming a Protestant, de Labadie travelled extensively throughout Europe. Throughout the time of his travels, de Labadie became well-known and attracted a number of dedicated followers. However, as a result of the fierce persecution waged by the Roman Catholic Church against the new Protestants, de Labadie fled to Holland and became a minister in the Walloon Church in Middelburg. Through the course of his ministry and preaching there, Anna Maria and Jean de Labadie met, both drawn to and captivated by the powerful message of the Word of God.

The practice of the early Christian church as recorded in the book of Acts profoundly influenced the preaching of Jean de Labadie. He taught that serious Christians ought to retreat from the world and develop a simple, uncluttered lifestyle that allowed generous amounts of time for meditation, prayer and an uninterrupted fellowship with God. To achieve this, he and his followers developed a commune, sold all their

Continued on page 12...

Reclaiming the covenant (2)

Toward a Reformed theology on justice, peace and the integrity of Creation

Bert Hielema

Judging by the number of registrants at the "Covenant" conference in Madison, Wisconsin, there is not really a great deal of interest among Christians about "the fate of the earth" or "the covenant." Dordt College was the only Christian College officially represented by a staff member. There must be hundreds of Christian Colleges in North America. Are matters of "reclaiming the covenant" not important to them? What is more challenging for future generations than to teach them how to live "Christianly," that is, within the means of creation, in the decades to come?

Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), the Canadian organization concerned with matters of "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation," had spontaneous representation from its national board (Clarence and Jenny Visser from Edmonton) and from CPJ Ontario (myself and my wife Diny).

The churches also sent very few delegates: I counted no more than four ministers or priests. Of the 57 officially registered, 10 were speakers and staff, 25 were from the immediate area and thus only 22 were from a greater distance away, and needed lodging. Based on these numbers I can only conclude that very few people in affluent North America want to sacrifice time and money to broaden their knowledge about matters of cardinal importance to the survival of our culture.

Dr. James Van Hoeven was so correct when he called for repentance from our sins. Said he, "Indeed, it is only from within the biblical description of human and systematic sin that we can recognize that the initiative for the world's liberation must come from God, and in recognition of that

truth to realize that a primary part of our vocation will be confession and repentance."

I also learned something else. In the workshops (there were three, dealing with either justice, peace or creation) I found something which troubled me, something I also found in *Earthkeeping* published in 1980 as the first fruit of the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship when its topic was "Christian Stewardship and Natural Resources." Both in the conference workshop and in this book the allusion is made that humanity can redeem the world. Said the workshop report:

The sacrifices to redeem the earth will be profound and the changes will be great... when humanity learns to make peace with nature, the result will be renewal of the fruitfulness of the earth, and renewal of the joy of living as well (emphasis is mine.)

Earthkeeping says essentially the same:

Yet Christians of all people, have the power in Christ to redeem the human character from its perversity and lead it into a new life in which stewardship, husbandry and a

nurturing vulnerability is 'natural' (emphasis is mine.)

Is this really the case? Does fallen humanity have the power in Christ to redeem creation? The conference was entitled, "Reclaiming the Covenant: Towards a Reformed Theology on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation." Is that Reformed theology?

Self-renewal impossible

Just as the human-made momentum of the "greenhouse effect" cannot be stopped, even if all people on earth today quit driving cars and all factories were to be outlawed and only human-, horse-, water-, wind- and sunpower were allowed to aid humanity in its technological quest for survival, even so, "the earth is wearing out like a garment," as Psalm 102:26 says.

Even if all the people on earth became Christians overnight, the cosmos would still have to be cleaned, since being a Christian does not mean that sin is banned, but only that sin is acknowledged and forgiven. It is only Christ who can redeem us from the consequences of the sins committed by us and our forebears, sins which are now becoming so evident.

That the earth will wear out like a garment does not mean that God will discard it, as we throw away a piece of garbage. God made no junk and he will not "junk" what he has made. God made creation good. Creation has no faults in itself. Creation did not fall into sin. We did. Creation does not

stand condemned. We do. Creation waits in eager expectation for a new start, to receive the new people of God, people like Adam, David, Daniel, Mary, and my ancestors, who are resting in the earth until God awakes them to be allotted the heritage of an unpolluted earth and a cleaned-out heaven, to be developed anew by us and the untold millions of those who have been on the Lord's side.

On that day the fruits of their small acts of obedience will be revealed (Rev. 14:13) and they will keep on exploring the infinite possibilities of creation, just as they had done in their sinful lives, but in a way which God had wanted humanity to do from creation's initial inception.

Humanity made a basic error; it fell into sin and that infection has made us go so wrong that only on the Day of the Lord will a totally new start be possible.

Rapture allows rape of earth

This does not mean that here and now we can do nothing. On the contrary. This life we live today is but an experimental station for eternity. Because the earth will be our eternal habitat, we have to learn to treat it properly now. And that is hard work. Perhaps the reason why so few people attended this conference is because it is much easier to believe, with Hal Lindsey and the 20-million people who bought his book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, that the Great Rapture will free us from this cursed earth, as some call this planet.

It has been one of the greatest coups of the Great Deceiver to make people think that this earth is a foreign strand,

wilderness waste. Exactly because people believe in a Great Rapture, the Great Rape of the earth is continuing unabated. Precisely because God promises us a new earth, we have to live our lives now as if we are already renewed, which we are.

That is much more difficult than going to a "heaven out there" which robs us of the incentive for personal involvement here and now. Our lives as Christians must involve a holy discipline, featuring all facets of life, from poison-free medication to toxin-free food, from clean water to pure air, from healthy communities to strong families, from creation-centred schooling to proper "oikonomics." From A to Z, all of life is redeemed. Reformed theology says that all of life must be lived in a God-pleasing way.

An eventual "heaven on earth" calls for imaginative Christian living now; it calls for joyful covenantal life in the service of the Kingdom, which involves all of creation. All our attempts, however, are but feeble and will never lead, by themselves, to a redeemed earth. In our world, the only world we have, one world now burdened under the weight of our sin, and showing it more day-by-day, not we, but Christ is making all things new. That is biblical. And it's Reformed theology. We cannot do it, no matter how "Christian and Reformed" we are, but try we must in faith and wait we must with patience. Wait with the whole creation for the purifying fire of judgment.

Bert Hielema is an appraiser of real estate living in Tweed, Ont.

... continued from page 11. possessions, divided them among themselves and dedicated their time to godly living. De Labadie and his followers also left the traditional church and formed their own "fellowship."

As she listened to Jean de Labadie, Anna Maria van Schuurman became convinced that de Labadie's lifestyle emphasis was the only way a Christian could truly live obediently. Her life motto became, "my love is crucified," replacing her former dedication to scholarly excellence and artistic achievement. In her most important publication, *Eucleria* ("Selection of the Best Part"), based on Luke 10:42, Anna Maria explained why she left the traditional church and became a participant in de Labadie's Fellowship.

Anna Maria's commitment to this austere lifestyle was not without an intense personal struggle. Here we see a wealthy well-known woman, regarded

as an excellent theologian, an unparalleled linguist, a superior thinker and accomplished artist, give up all the status and opportunity which she had achieved to associate herself with an ascetic religious group.

The arduous struggle which surrounded her decision convinced her more than ever that prior to meeting de Labadie she had indeed "loved the world more than she had loved God." Against the backdrop of the 17th century's desire for power, money, learning and status, and her own privileged upbringing and achievements, this confession and action by Anna Maria is a moving testimony to the change that the Word of God brought to her life. From this crucial time on, all of Anna Maria's varied gifts were humbly used toward honouring God.

For the rest of her life, Anna Maria remained a part of the de Labadie Fellowship. The group travelled from Middelburg, via

Amsterdam and Herford in Westfalen, to Altona, Denmark, where Jean de Labadie died in 1674. Threats of war between Denmark and Sweden caused the group to move back to the Netherlands. The Fellowship settled in Wieuwerd, Friesland, on an estate owned by a friend of Anna Maria's. Here they purchased land, houses, and barns in order to ensure economic self-sufficiency. The group began a cheese-making enterprise, built a wool and spinning mill, a forge, a tannery, a flour mill, a brewery and developed its own printing business which was used to publish their books and tracts. Anna Maria's extensive linguistic and musical talents once again came to expression as she translated many French hymns into Dutch for worship with the Fellowship.

From time to time, other prominent individuals either visited or joined the industrious group. Dr. Hendrick van Deventer, a well-

known medical doctor associated himself with the de Labadie group. At Wieuwerd, van Deventer developed his own sedatives which for a time became a major source of revenue for the community. Several Calvinist ministers became a part of the group and contributed a great deal to its strength and integrity. Louise Huygens, a daughter of the prominent poet Constantyn Huygens, and Maria Sibylle Merian, a renowned artist, also gave up their wealth and found their way to Wieuwerd.

Perhaps the best-known visitor to meet with Anna Maria and her community was the Englishman, William Penn and a group of Quakers in 1677. From the de Labadie Fellowship Penn learned a great deal about how a sensitive Christian fellowship could operate. Through contact with these frequent guests and through the writings which were published, Anna Maria managed to keep in touch with the academic and cultural

society outside of the narrow focus of the group.

On May 14, 1678, after years of being an intimate part of the de Labadie community, Anna Maria van Schuurman died. According to history, she was buried in the cemetery beside the renowned church in Wieuwerd.

This remarkable Christian woman stood up for what she believed and dared to be different. Anna Maria broke completely with the existing conventions and traditions of her day. This break marked the only way in which she could live a Christian life which was consistent with her personal convictions. Anna Maria's example of total dedication to God is definitely a challenge to be met by both Christian women and men today.

Barthie Knoppers studied theology at Amsterdam's Free University and is at present an active homemaker and member of the Committee for Women in the Christian Reformed Church (CW-CRC). Joanna Romyn Voss studied psychology, sociology, and history at Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa, and is now homemaker and teacher at Edmonton Christian High School.



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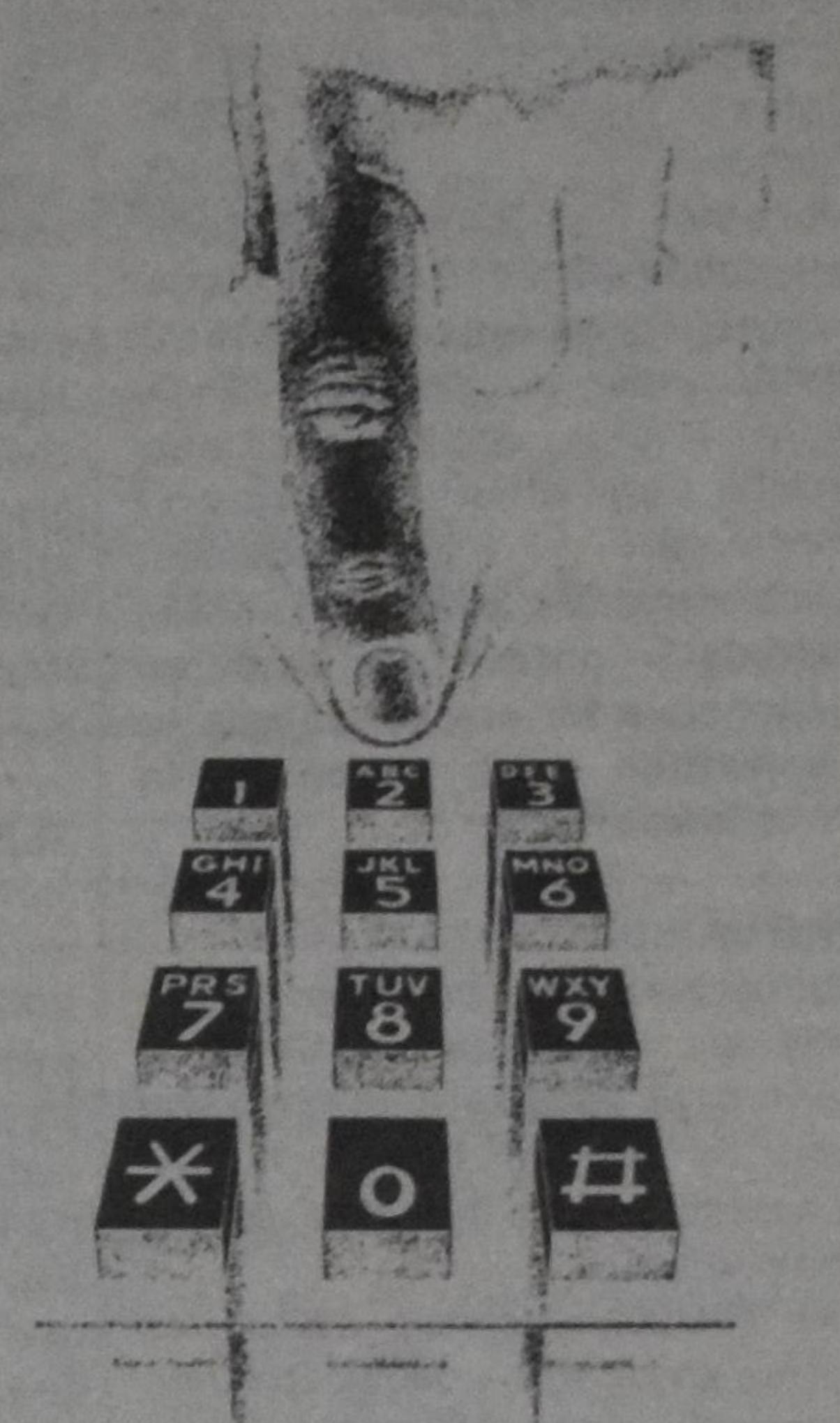
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<p>Births \$25.00 Marriages & Engagements \$30.00 Anniversaries \$35.00 2-column anniversaries \$60.00 Obituaries \$35.00 Notes of thanks \$25.00 Birthdays \$25.00 All other one-column classified advertisements: \$10.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number, \$25.00 extra. Photos: \$15.00 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.) Calvinist Contact will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>OBITUARIES Obituaries should be composed as they are to appear in <i>Calvinist Contact</i>. A sheet with information sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion. The \$35.00 rate for obituaries covers any length up to six column inches. Calvinist Contact reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$10.00 per column inch.</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS Non-subscribing newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in <i>Calvinist Contact</i> will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only \$15.00! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose \$15.00 and the couple's future address.</p> <p>Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd. 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1. Phone: (416) 682-8311 FAX: (416) 682-8313</p>	<p>REKMAN: With joy and thankfulness to our Father, we, Casper and Diana, are happy to announce the birth of our first child, a son, MATTHEW SCOTT, born Jan. 19, 1989, weighing 7 lbs. 2 oz. Matthew is the 10th grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. K. John Werkema of Embro, Ont. and the eighth grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Cas Rekman of Sarnia, Ont. Great-grandmothers are Mrs. Neeltje Meyer of the Netherlands, and Mrs. Jean Kapteyn of Sarnia, Ont. Home address: 1224 Isabella St., Sarnia, ON N7S 1S6.</p> <p>SLAPPENDEL: Jim and Bernice are proud to announce the safe arrival of their first child, ANDRIA DAWN. She was born Jan. 22, 1989 at 7:35 a.m. at the Welland General Hospital weighing 7 lbs. 8 oz. Proud grandparents are Bernard and Anne Evers of Wellandport, Ont. and Bas and Trudy Slappendel of Fenwick, Ont. Home address: 1361 Maple St., Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0.</p> <p>STEVENS: Praise the Lord who made all things well. He blessed our children, John & Anne Stevens, with a healthy baby son, their first one. SCOTT ROBERT was born Jan. 25, 1989. He is the 13th grandchild for Ralph and Elly Hoftijzer and the 18th grandchild for Hennie Stevens. Home address: R.R.#2, Drayton, ON N0G 1P0.</p> <p>TAMMING: Thankful for his faithfulness and with praise to God for this tiny creation, John and Eleanor wish to announce the birth of their first child, KATHLEEN BETHANY, born Jan. 9, 1989. Katie Beth is the first grandchild for both Albert and Martha Tamming of Thornhill, Ont., and Kees and Berta VanderStelt of Hamilton, Ont. Home address: 43 Ranchwood Cres., London, ON N6G 3A1.</p>	<p>1959 February 12 1989 "In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy path." (Prov. 3:6)</p> <p>HARM and ANNIE BISSCHOP (nee De Beck) We pray that the Lord will bless you and keep you in his care. With love from all of us: Laura — Chatham Bob & Carol — Ridgeway Jeff & Lisa — Chatham Karen & Andrew (friend) — Redeemer College Home address: R.R.#2, Kentbridge, ON N0P 1V0.</p> <p>1959 February 13 1989 On Feb. 13, the Lord willing,</p> <p>HILLE (Al) and GRACE SLAGER (nee Dijkstra) hope to celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary. We are thankful that you have been blessed with these years together, Mom and Dad, and pray that you may be given many more with the Lord's blessing. Love from your children and grandchildren:</p> <p>Patty & Karl Reyneveld — Woodstock, Ont. Jonathan, Jacob, Charlene, Derek Peter & Diana Slager — Tavistock, Ont. Melissa, Scott, Amanda Harry & Tammy Slager — Tavistock, Ont. Matthew Marlene & Mike Bloxsidge — Woodstock, Ont. Tony, Kevin Donny & Toni Slager — Tavistock, Ont. Courtney Hilda Slager & Roy McDonald (fiance) — at home Lori Slager — at home Home address: R.R. #2, Tavistock, ON N0B 2R0.</p>	<p>"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." (John 14:2) On Tuesday, Jan. 3, 1989, the Lord took unto himself</p> <p>ALBERT BEENS at the age of 79 years. Dearly beloved husband of Teena Beens (nee De Hoog) whom he married on Jan. 28, 1939. Dear father of: Minnie & Dirk Slikker — Winnipeg, Man. Arlene & John Van de Hoef — Winnipeg, Man. Dear grandfather of: Jane & Cecil Dubay Marilyn & Tim Barron Dirk Slikker & Dawn Moran (fiancee) Mark Slikker & Marion Knights (fiancee) Cathy Slikker all of Winnipeg, Man. Debbie & Karl Sorge — Vancouver, B.C. Alex Vande Hoef Sherri Vande Hoef Diana Van de Hoef Jennifer Van de Hoef all of Winnipeg, Man. Also survived by two great-grandchildren, one brother and four sisters in the Netherlands and one sister in England. He was predeceased by one son in 1963, three sisters and one brother. Funeral service was held at the College Ave. Chr. Ref. Church in Winnipeg, Man., on Jan. 7, 1989. Rev. C. Bishop officiated. Home address: Donwood Home, 217-171 Donwood Dr., Winnipeg, MB R2G 0V9.</p> <p>Aug. 27, 1909 Jan. 22, 1989 On January 22, 1989, our very dearly beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather</p> <p>JACOBUS VAN DER TOORN graduated into glory. While he is and will be much missed by all, we take great comfort in the knowledge he is with his dearly beloved Lord. Lovingly remembered by his dear wife Wilma van der Toorn, Holland Christian Homes in Brampton, Ont. Children: Pete & Audrey Hoekstra — Van Der Toorn — Limehouse, Ont. Jim & Jennie Van Der Toorn — Richmond Hill, Ont. Grandchildren: Brian & Wendy Van Ek-Hoekstra — Cadillac, Mich. Robert Hoekstra Jim Hoekstra Suzanne Hoekstra all of Limehouse, Ont. Yvonne Van Der Toorn James Van Der Toorn Michelle Van Der Toorn all of Richmond Hill, Ont. Great-grandchildren: Stephanie Van Ek Joshua Van Ek both of Cadillac, Mich. "For a day in the courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. (Ps. 84:10)</p>	<p>At God's appointed time, Jan. 20, 1989, the Lord called home our beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather</p> <p>IDS HAAKSMA at the age of 78 years. "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." (2 Cor. 5:8) He is survived by his wife Mary Haaksma (nee Nierop) and children: Nick & Sadie Buis — Aylmer, Ont. Cicil & Frieda Aukema — Chatham, Ont. Peter & Tina Haaksma — Grand Rapids, Mich. Ali & Anna Haaksma — Oakville, Ont. Norman & Dora Haaksma — London, Ont. 25 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Predeceased by a daughter, Edith Gelok. Correspondence address: Heritage Place, Apt. 3, 110 Caverley Rd., Aylmer, ON N5H 2P4.</p> <p>"The Lord is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear?" (Ps. 27:1) "We can do all things through Christ who strengthened us." (Phil. 4:13) The Lord peacefully took home on Jan. 17, 1989,</p> <p>WILMA VAN ZEGGELAAR at the age of 87 years and 10 months. Dearly beloved wife of Mr. Art Van Zeggelaar. Born in Holland on March 8, 1901, she immigrated to Canada with her family on May 10, 1948, and settled in the Iron Springs district. She was the devoted mother, grandmother and great-grandmother of: Gerda (Nick) Wamsteeker — Lethbridge Henry (Rita) Van Zeggelaar — Edmonton Tressa (Fred) Sikkens — Iron Springs Gerrit (Kathy) Van Zeggelaar — Iron Springs John (Bertha) Van Zeggelaar — Iron Springs 19 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. She was also survived by one sister, Mrs. Hein Verhoef in the Netherlands. She resided in the Iron Springs, Alta, district until October 1986, at which time she took up residence at Southland Nursing Home in Lethbridge. She was predeceased by one son, Walter, April 1960; four brothers and one sister. The family Graveside Service in Archmount Memorial Gardens in Lethbridge was held on Friday, Jan. 20, 1989, at 11 a.m. The memorial service in the Chr. Ref. Church of Iron Springs, Alberta, was held on Friday, Jan. 20, 1989, at 1:30 p.m. With Rev. Jack Van De Hoef officiating. Home address: Box 143, Iron Springs, AB T0K 1G0.</p> <p>Help wanted</p> <p>Small, modern greenhouse near Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. is looking for a young, energetic person willing to work. Possibilities for advancement. Wages to be discussed. Please reply in writing to: File #2514, c/o Calvinist Contact, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.</p> <p>Van Eck Greenhouses, Waterdown, Ont. We are in need of one person for approximately four months to work in our greenhouses. Starting time: month of February. Please call: Jack Van Eck at (416) 689-5100.</p> <p>Help wanted</p> <p>Wanted: young man to work on dairy farm with Holstein cattle and farm machinery. Experience preferred. Dunnville area. Ask for Rick at (416) 774-4421.</p> <p>For Rent</p> <p>Large country home, sleeps seven to eight, completely furnished. Twenty minutes from Wonderland (Toronto). Children welcome. \$500 per week, \$1,500 per month. Phone (904) 357-9603.</p> <p>Completely furnished mobile home, sleeps eight, pool available. Central Florida, one hour from Disney World, Cypress Gardens, Silver Springs and Daytona. \$500 per week, \$1,500 per month. Phone (904) 357-9603.</p> <p>Single person to work on large row crop farm in Southern Alberta. Must have references. Mobile home supplied. Phone (403) 345-4200 or write: Box 1314, Coaldale, AB T0K 0L0.</p>

Classified

(21)

Teachers**Teachers****Teachers****Teachers****Teachers**

BRESLAU: Woodland Christian High School invites applications for September 1989 in all sciences 9-OAC, English 9-OAC, and part-time special ed. Write: Woodland Chr. High School, R.R.#1, Breslau, ON N0B 1M0. Phone (519) 648-2114.

BURLINGTON: Trinity Christian School Burlington, Ont. has possible openings for teachers in the Junior and Intermediate divisions. Please send resume to: Trinity Christian School, 650 Walkers Line, Burlington, ON L7N 2E7.

OWEN SOUND: Timothy Christian School has a possible opening for Grade 4 and 5 combination beginning September 1989. Interested applicants please write to: G. Bierma, Principal, 199 4th Ave. W., Owen Sound, ON N4K 4V1.

OTTAWA: Ottawa Christian School invites responses from suitably qualified applicants for September 1989. A vacancy is anticipated at the lower primary level and two in the upper elementary level. Teachers whose specialties are French or physical education are of special interest to us. Please send applications or letters of inquiry to: William Van Dyke, Principal, Ottawa Christian School, 2191 Benjamin Ave., Ottawa, ON K2A 1P6 or phone (613) 722-5836.

PRINCE GEORGE: Cedars Christian School situated in the centre of B.C. in the industrial city of Prince George (CSI #11) is seeking applications, one possibly for Grade 1, the other is a tentative Grade 3/4 assignment. Inquiries may be sent to: Cedars Chr. School c/o Principal, 701 North Nechako Rd., Prince George, BC V2K 1A2. Phone: (604) 564-0707.

RIMBEY, Alta: The Rimbev Chr. School, situated in beautiful central Alberta is in need of an elementary teacher or junior high teacher. Please send resume to: Henry Vandermeer, Principal, Rimbev Chr. School, Box 1305, Rimbev, AB, POC 2J0.

SMITHERS, B.C.: The Chr. School Society of Smithers and Telkwa, B.C. is in need of a French teacher in Grades 4-12, a teacher for upper elementary language arts and a learning assistance teacher for the 1989-90 school year. Please send all applications to: Glen Ewald, Box 2117, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0. Phone: (604) 847-9833.

SASKATOON, Sask: Saskatoon Christian School is receiving applications for a teacher/principal for the 1989-90 school year. Grades to be taught are 6,7,8. We are an interdenominational school, associated with Christian Schools International. We require a leader with a valid teaching certificate. Preference will be given to applicants with teaching and administrative experience. Interested applicants, please forward resume and/or inquiries to: Saskatoon Christian School, 2410 Haultain Ave., Saskatoon, SK S7J 1R3. Phone (306) 343-1494 or Wes Vanstone at (306) 374-6885.

SEBRINGVILLE: Stratford District Christian School. Our school is expanding! We have need of a Grade 3/4 teacher, beginning September 1989. At present 17 students will be in this combination class. Come to Festival City to begin or continue your teaching career. Please include all relevant material with your letter of application and send it to: Peter C. Van Manen, Principal, Stratford District Christian School, 130 Huron Rd., R.R.#1, Sebringville, ON N0K 1X0.

Immanuel Christian School

Charlottetown, P.E.I.

invites applications for the position of

TEACHING PRINCIPAL

for Sept. 1989

ICS is interdenominational with grades 1-6 and has been operational for three years. The successful applicant should have both training and teaching experience in Christian education. If you feel qualified to accept this leadership challenge please send resume and references to:

Recruiting committee c/o Immanuel Christian School
P.O. Box 1991, Charlottetown, P.E.I., Canada C1A 7N7
Phone (902) 892-9781

Jarvis District Christian School

invites applications for the following positions effective

September 1989:

Grade 2 with about 23 pupils,
Grade 6 with about 28 pupils.

Possible vacancies also exist in junior grades.

An interest and ability to teach in the following areas would be an asset: art, French, industrial arts and music. J.D.C.S. continues to experience growth and expects an enrolment of 240-plus pupils in a 10-classroom school for the 1989/90 school year. If you are interested in joining a team of enthusiastic, dedicated Christian teachers, please send your letter of application and resume to:

Garry Glasbergen, Principal
Jarvis District Christian School
R.R.#1, Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0
Phone: (519) 587-4444 (school) or 587-5374 (home)

Teachers ... are you interested in:

- A beautiful new facility?
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- All the challenges and richness of a truly transdenominational school?

Heritage Christian School, Lindsay, Ont., invites your application for junior/intermediate positions, beginning September 1989. Please contact:

G. Brock, Principal
130 Colborne St. W., Lindsay, ON K9V 3T5
Tel. (705) 324-8363

Calvin Christian School

245 Sutton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2G 0T1

Due to continuing growth and the imminent expansion of the facilities we are soliciting applications for the following positions:

Grade 2, Grade 4, and Grade 5

A strong possibility for an additional

jr. high (7-9) teacher

also exists. We currently have 274 students and a staff of 15 who are ably assisted by two remedial teachers and classroom aides.

Construction of the new facilities will commence, D.V., March 1, 1989, and when completed an additional 15,000 sq. feet will have been added to the present facilities.

Interested applicants should send their letters and resume to Mr. John Doornbos, Principal, at the above address or phone (204) 338-7981 for further information.

Maranatha Christian Academy

An interdenominational Christian elementary school, invites applications for the position of

TEACHING PRINCIPAL

This is a full-time position, involving administrative and teaching responsibilities.

Please send resume to:

Maranatha Christian Academy
2440 Virginia Park, Windsor, ON N9E 2B4
Attention: Chairman Education Committee
Tel. (519) 966-7424

Clinton and District Christian School needs an experienced

teacher for the senior grades

commencing September 1989

Ability to teach physical education and/or music is an asset. The possibility to combine this position with the

vice-principals

is open. Interested persons please send resume to:

Mr. Ralph Schuurman, Principal
Clinton and District Christian School
P.O. Box 658, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0

For information you can call the principal at (519) 482-7851 (school) or (519) 482-7088 (home)

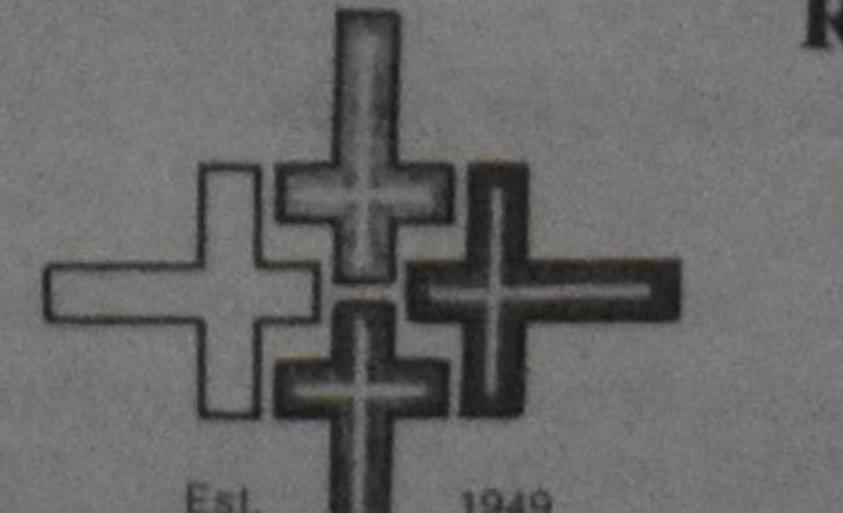
Alliston Community Christian School

has a full-time opening at the primary level.

The successful applicant will be fully responsible for the Kindergarten program (about 15 students) which will take up 50 per cent of the week. The other 50 per cent will involve working with the Grade 1 and 2 teacher on a team-teaching basis. For further information write or phone:

J. Lunshof, Principal
Alliston Community Christian School
P.O. Box 1122, Alliston, ON L0M 1A0
Phone: (705) 435-4611

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL REQUIRED



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The Edmonton Christian Schools are inviting applications from interested individuals for two administrative vacancies. The positions are at two of our elementary junior high schools (Kindergarten through Grade 9). French, music and special education vacancies are also anticipated. If you are interested in any of these positions, please send your resume and application to:

Mr. P.C. Prinsen
North Edmonton Chr. School
13470 Fort Road, Edmonton AB T5A 1C5
Telephone (403) 475-2818

Miscellaneous

London Christian Homes Association

is doing a needs survey in accordance with Ministry of Housing requirements, regarding housing for seniors in London.

If you are 58 years or older and interested please call:

Paul G. Buma (519) 453-2400
for a questionnaire and detailed covering letter

Classified

Teachers	For Sale	For Sale	Help wanted	Help wanted								
<p>STRATHROY: John Calvin Christian School is receiving applications for a primary grade teacher and a part-time French teacher (approx. 45 per cent Grades 4-8) with some principal's relief to complete the teaching load, for the 1989-90 school year. Please contact Mr. H. Wiersema for application forms at (519) 245-1934 or (519) 289-5562 or write to 48 York St., Strathroy, ON N7G 2E3.</p> <p>TERRACE: Centennial Chr. School, located in Terrace, B.C., is inviting applications for openings in K-8 for the 1989-90 school year. Centennial Chr. School, operating since 1967, with a present enrolment of 92 students, moving into new school facilities and adding a possible Grade 8 class, will make the 89-90 school year exciting and challenging. The school, located in the beautiful Skeena Valley, offers many dynamic opportunities for teachers. For further information please contact: Frank Voogd, Principal, 3602 Sparks St., Terrace, BC V8G 2V6. Tel. (604) 635-6173.</p> <p>WYOMING: The John Knox Christian School of Wyoming will have a definite opening in a Primary or Junior class of 25 pupils. Send your inquiries or letter of application to William Hordyk, Principal, Box 81, Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0 or phone: (519) 845-3112.</p>												
<p>Help wanted</p> <p>Thunder Bay Chr. Community Centre is seeking a unique individual to co-ordinate their present outreach ministry. Duties include: continuing and expanding existing programs or activities for children and adults and creating new programs. Being able to deal with adults and children from all walks of life such as Native Canadians would be an asset. Send resume to: Bob Bolt, R.R.#3, Tenth Side Rd., Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V2.</p>												
<p>Accommodations</p> <p>House/car exchange: Senior couple seeks exchange with a couple from Nova Scotia or New Brunswick for the month of June. We have a comfortable house with all conveniences and a good car. Contact A. Bolhuis, Englaan 70, Leersum, 3956VR, Holland. Phone 3434-56571.</p> <p>Church news returns next week</p> <p>For Rent</p> <p>Want to rent a car while in Holland?</p> <p>Ld AutoRent</p> <p>Jan Kalma has the key to all forms of car rentals.</p> <p>Will deliver car to Amsterdam airport if desired.</p> <p>jan kalma</p> <p>De Meer 24, 9201 EZ Drachten The Netherlands - Tel (31) 5120-15199 Fax (31) 5120-32324</p>												
	<p>February special from Willox Custom Butchery</p> <p>One hind of beef at \$2.35/lb., Grade A1 Red Brand Beef. Appr. 135 lbs. hanging weight, all cut and wrapped to your specifications, Canadian or European way. No extra costs! Allow two to three weeks!</p> <p>When picking up your freezer order, let us give you the Dutch treat for FREE: two croquettes on a bun with coffee.</p> <p>Store specials:</p> <table> <tbody> <tr> <td>2 rolls of Oakrun Rusk</td> <td>\$0.95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 dish cloths</td> <td>\$0.95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 rolls of King peppermints</td> <td>\$0.90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pork schnitzel, breaded</td> <td>(per kg.) \$7.49</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Call collect and place your order today. Ask for Corrie.</p> <p>Phone: (416) 945-6639 Willox Custom Butchery 43 Main St. East Grimsby, ON L3M 1M7</p>	2 rolls of Oakrun Rusk	\$0.95	2 dish cloths	\$0.95	3 rolls of King peppermints	\$0.90	Pork schnitzel, breaded	(per kg.) \$7.49		<p>Christian Cottage Imports Division of Son Catchers Renewal Crafts seeks</p> <p>Executive Director</p> <p>Half-time / Possible Full-time Position Primary responsibility to promote and develop marketing opportunities in Canada for cottage industry handcrafts from CRWRC sponsored income generation projects.</p> <p>Please apply in writing to: Christian Cottage Imports P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8 For more information call (416) 336-8698</p>	
2 rolls of Oakrun Rusk	\$0.95											
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	<p>JUST RELEASED!</p> <p><i>Covenant of Love</i>, recorded by Heather Kikkert (of Heather and Helen)</p> <p>10 Christian contemporary songs dedicated to our Covenant-keeping Lord! Available in cassette only.</p> <p>To order, send \$11.95 (tx. incl.) plus \$1.85 p/h to: H. Kikkert, R.R.# 1, Grassie, ON L0R 1M0; or call (416) 945-6112.</p>		<p>Calvin Chr. Ref. Church, Ottawa, Ont. is seeking a</p> <p>youth pastor</p> <p>We invite those who are interested to write or call Anky Bergmans, Chairperson, Search Committee, 99 Canterbury Blvd., Nepean, ON K2G 2M6. Phone: (613) 224-1250 after 6 p.m. Job description and further information available on request.</p>	<p>Status Report</p> <p>\$10,585,302 1988-89 Budget \$3,308,980 Total Budgeted Income to 12-31-88 \$2,801,073 Actual Budgeted Income to 12-31-88 \$3,284,759 Actual Expenditure to 12-31-88</p> <p>16 Open Positions in Central America, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, the Philippines, Brazil, Nigeria, Liberia, Guinea, Mali, and Sierra Leone.</p> <p>CONTACT US by phone or in writing for more information.</p> <p> Christian Reformed World Missions 2860 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49560 (616) 246-0700 3475 Mainway, P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, Ontario, Canada L7R 3Y8 (416) 336-2920</p>								
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RRSP and RRIF approx. 9.25%	Regular fund 9.75%											

Events



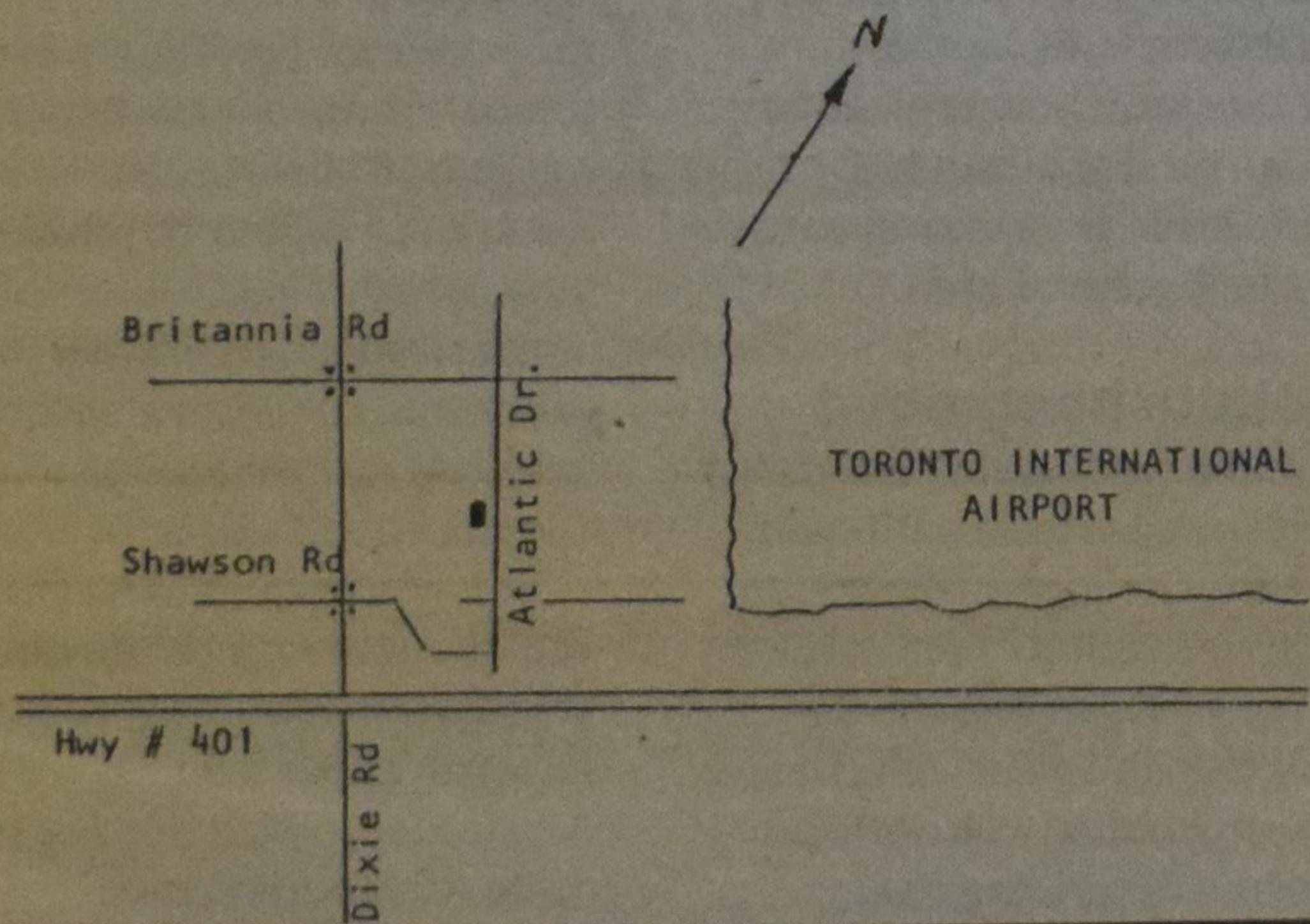
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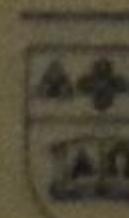


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Calendar of Events

Feb. 10-12 25th Anniversary celebrations of Trinity CRC, St. Catharines, Ont. Thanksgiving celebrations on Feb. 10, at 7:30 p.m. (Rev. R.J. Sikkema), and Feb. 12, at 10 a.m. (Rev. H. Jonker) and 4:30 p.m. (Rev. J. Hellenga), followed by light supper at 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 11 Concert by world-famous "Canadian Orpheus Male Choir" at 8 p.m. in the Heritage Hall, Holland Chr. Homes, 7900 McLaughlin Rd., Brampton, Ont. For tickets call (416) 459-8439.

Feb. 17-19 25th Anniversary celebrations of the Belleville District Chr. School, Belleville, Ont. Children's performance on Feb. 17, fun fair and anniversary banquet on Feb. 18, open house on Feb. 19. For info. call Margaret TerHaar at (613) 395-2638.

Feb. 20-24 The King's College Choir Tour. Feb. 20: CRC, Salmon Arm, B.C.; Feb. 21: First CRC, New Westminster, B.C.; Feb. 22: First CRC, Victoria, B.C.; Feb. 23: Trinity CRC, Abbotsford, B.C.; Feb. 24: First CRC, Chilliwack, B.C.

Feb. 21-24 Extension Lecture "Challenging Biotechnology" by Dr. Hank Bestman in Prince George, Terrace, Smithers and Houston, B.C.

Feb. 24 Organ recital by John Wm. Vandertuin at 8 p.m. in Westminster United Church, Winnipeg, Man.

Mar. 6-7 RCBPA Fifth Annual Convention at the Holiday Inn, Burlington, Ont. Theme: "Stewardship, Christian Responsibility in Business." For info. call (416) 524-1203.

Mar. 22 Stained Glass Concert "Beautifully Bach" featuring the Hamilton Philharmonic (Boris Brott, conductor), and Redeemer College Choir (Christiaan Teeuwsen, conductor) and soloists. At 8 p.m. in the Redeemer College Auditorium, Ancaster, Ont.

Apr. 8 Christian Male Choir Festival (seven Ontario choirs participating) at St. Paul's Anglican Church, Toronto, Ont. Watch for announcements.

Apr. 21-23 25th Anniversary of the Brantford Christian School. Alumni, former teachers, members and friends are invited. For info. call (519) 752-0433.

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For more information talk to your council or contact us, **WORSHIP CONFERENCE**, Zion Chr. Ref. Church, 409 Adelaide Ave. E., Oshawa, ON L1G 2A2. Telephone: (416) 723-0131.

Dutch

Dé mens bestaat niet



Photo: Friesch Dagblad.
Voor veel blanken in Zuid-Afrika zijn negers op zijn best kinderen, die geleid moeten worden door vader de blanke.

Ype Schaaf

Naast de planten, de vissen, de insecten en de andere dieren leeft de mens. Van zijn soort zijn er vele miljoenen op de aarde. Het zijn rechtoplopende wezens tussen de 1,60 en 2,10 m. Het zijn alleseters (soms zelfs van elkaar) en ze worden in onze streken gemiddeld ouder dan zeventig jaar. vergeleken met de dieren zijn ze oversexed en hebben ze een zeer grote herseninhoud. Ze dreigen dan ook de wereld over te bevolken.

Over de afkomst van de mens zijn de geleerden het niet eens. Is hij in Afrika ontstaan? (een kind wordt geboren en mensen zijn ontstaan). Of was hij er ineens op meer plaatsen op aarde? We praten dan over een ver verleden waarover de schattingen van de geleerden ook nog weer honderdduizenden jaren uiteen lopen. Waar het dan om gaat is, dat er een moment is geweest, waarop een mensapensoort op de achterste poten is gaan lopen, waarna de inhoud van zijn schedel heel langzaam is gaan uitdijen en hij ook een deel van zijn haren is gaan verliezen. Het eindresultaat van die evolutie is de patatboer op de hoek, de zangeres op tv, en de dokter in zijn wittejas, maar ook Chinezen met spleetogen, donkere negers en witte blanken.

Mijn oom Jan moest van die

evolutie niets hebben. Hij heeft vele jaren lang rashonden gefokt en zijn op die praktijk gebaseerde theorie was heel eenvoudig: geef me een takshond en ik haal er via vele kruisingen een hazewind uit of een bulldog, maar nooit een kat.

Oom Jans visie spreekt mij nog altijd aan. Er zijn echter ook mensen, die de evolutie leer heel anders bestrijden. Zij beschouwen het begin van de Bijbel als een aardrijkskunde en een biologieles en gaan daarom het scheppingsverhaal wetenschappelijk onderbouwen. Ze noemen zichzelf creationisten en hebben hun argumenten om te laten zien, dat de Bijbel wetenschappelijk toch gelijk heeft.

Nu is godsdienst iets anders dan wetenschap en ze door elkaar husselen heeft gevaarlijke kanten. Echter dat is een verhaal apart, wat nog wel aan bod moet komen, maar niet nu. Het ging immers over dé mens die niet bestaat.

Zeker, er zijn mensen die leven of zich gedragen als beesten. Er zijn bloedzuigers onder de mensen en verscheurende leeuwen en laffe wolven. Er zijn luchthartig fladderende vlinders, aasgieren en gladde alen. Er zijn kameleons, die alle kleuren kunnen aannemen; mussen die van de straat leven en varkens, die drek en smerigheid heerlijk

vinden.

Racisme

Men kan ook denken aan de discussies onder theologen in de zeventiende eeuw aan de Franeker Universiteit over de vraag of de neger wel een mens is met als slotconclusie, dat dat niet het geval was. Waarmee de slavernij en de slavenhandel christelijk en in die dagen dus ook wetenschappelijk gerechtvaardigd werden. Waren voor de Franeker' theologen negers geen mensen, voor vele blanken in Zuid-Afrika zijn ze op zijn best kinderen, die geleid moeten worden door vader de blanke. Vaders die (te) goed weten wat hun kinderen nodig hebben, zijn weer wat anders dan de betere mensen.

Er waren en er zijn op deze aarde vele soorten 'betere' en dus ook 'mindere' mensen. Dat kan met geld te maken hebben of met opleiding of met functie. Het kan ook vastzitten op komaf. Het kan te maken hebben met de buurt of de wijk, waar men wel of niet woont en de auto, die men wel of niet bezit, en de vakantietrip, die men wel of niet kan of wil maken.

Het verschijnsel van betere en mindere mensen wordt echt eng wanneer het gepaard gaat met absolutistische houdingen en overtuigingen. Die vindt men ten eerste in alle soorten racisme. Ik spreek van alle soorten, want er bestaat niet alleen racisme, dus superioriteitsgevoel op basis van ras en huidskleur van blanken tegenover negers, maar ook van de Bantoes tegenover Pygmeeën in een aantal Afrikaanse landen; van blanke Australiërs tegenover Aborigines, de oorspronkelijke bewoners van Australië; van Amharen tegenover de negervolken in het zuiden in Ethiopië; van Javanen tegenover Papoea's in Indonesië, enzovoort.

Geloofshoogmoed

Een ander en misschien wel gevaarlijker soort 'betere

mensen' zijn diegenen met wie de Lieveheer het extra getroffen heeft. Dat kunnen de leden zijn van een bepaalde kerk, die menen de waarheid in pacht te hebben; dat kunnen ook individuele gelovigen zijn, die prat gaan op hun bijzondere privérelatie met hun god; dat kunnen ook aanhangers van de ene wereldreligie tegenover die van een andere zijn. Hetzelfde gelovige absolutisme bestaat ook bij aanhangers van sommige ideologieën. Links en ultra-rechts lopen er nogal wat lieden rond, die op grond van hun visie op een superieure toon menen als enigen over de waarheid te beschikken.

Op het moment, dat godsdienst een soort huwelijk aangaat met ideologie wordt de zaak heel gevaarlijk. Dan belandt men bij die Zuidafrikaanse blanken, die geloven letterlijk in Gods naam geroepen te wezen om het 'baasskap' uit te oefenen over 'die swartman.' Men kan daarbij ook denken aan Chomeini, die in de naam van Allah nu al acht jaar zijn Iraniërs weet op te zwepen tot een heilige revolutie.

Cultuur hoogmoed

Minder gevaarlijk en eerder belachelijk zijn de nationale superioriteitsgevoelens, waar hele volken aan lijden, hoewel in het verleden vele van die volken zich ook lieten verleiden tot imperialistische oorlogen om hun superieure staat, cultuur of koning meer armslag te geven.

De Fransen vinden dat hun cultuur de hoogste is, want zij zijn toch de enigen, die echt logisch kunnen denken. Geboren te zijn op de 'British Isles,' de Britse eilanden, is voor de Engelsen nog altijd een speciaal voorrecht, waar de mensen van het continent niet aan kunnen tippen. De Duitsers hebben jaren lang gezongen 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles.' En Amerikanen noemen hun land 'God's own country,' Gods eigen land.

Amerikaanse zendelingen importeerden in Afrika zelfs

hun wc-papier, want 'made in USA' is nu eenmaal beter. En Nederlanders zijn en blijven de dominees en cabaretiers van de wereld, die altijd het belangrijke vingertje van de beterweters omhoog hebben. Maar ook de Chinezen hebben zich eeuwenlang cultureel zo superieur gevoeld dat niet alleen de bezockers en zendelingen, maar ook hun veroveraars de gunst aangedaan werd Chinees te mogen worden. En in Vietnam is net als in Korea geen plaats voor de minderwaardig geachte kinderen van Amerikanen en Vietnamese c.q. Koreaanse vrouwen.

En dan te weten dat er helemaal geen superieure cultuur op de wereld bestaat. Zelfs die samenlevingen, die wij in onze hoogmoed altijd primitief genoemd hebben, van volkjes in de Balimvallei van Irian Jaya of in het Haut-Massief bij het Tsjaadmeer in Afrika, zijn uiterst gecompliceerd georganiseerde gemeenschappen. Het enige wat gezegd kan worden is dat culturen en volken verschillen. Maar hoger of lager, beter of minder, hangt alleen maar af van de hoogte van de stoel of de ladder, waarop men in zijn hoogmoed zelf staat.

Er is nog iets vreemds. Die van Pingum moeten die van Witmarsum niet, maar zodra ze samen in de bus naar Amsterdam rijden worden ze al op de Afsluitdijk samen Friezen. Die uit Amsterdam moeten die uit Rotterdam niet en in Den Haag woont kale kak, maar samen op weg naar Spanje zijn ze in het vliegtuig al allemaal Nederlanders geworden. En wanneer mensen uit vele Europese landen in Afrika belanden zijn ze daar samen alleen nog blanken. Hoe verder van huis des te wijder de solidariteit.

Het is al gezegd als soortnaam is 'mens' hanteerbaar naast koe, spin, schelvis en winterkoninkje. Maar verder is elk mens een uniek nieuw mengsel van elementen uit twee families. Statistisch en genetisch is het daarbij vrijwel onmogelijk dat dezelfde mens ooit terugkomt. Reihcarnatie in die zin kan gewoon niet.

Bovendien is elk mens behalve dat unieke mengsel van komaf, ook nog man of vrouw, mannelijk of vrouwelijk. Hij of zij is jong, oud, dom of slim of van beide een beetje. Hij of zij is onderdrukt of bevrijd; rijk of arm; angstig achteruitkijkend of blij vooruitziend. Om al die redenen zeg ik: dé mens bestaat niet. En dat houdt ook in dat 'het publiek' niet bestaat en 'het geval' niet en ook niet 'de patient,' 'de jeugd,' 'de bejaarden,' 'de kijker' en 'de lezer.'

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Persoverzicht

Carl D. Tuyl



Het nieuwe kabinet poseerde voor de pers. Allemaal even lachen voor de foto, das recht, en buik inhouden. Er was niet bar veel verandering: een paar nieuwe gezichten. Wat aandacht trok was het feit, dat Perrin Beatty verplaatst werd naar Volksgezondheid — hetgeen in de pers werd uitgelegd als een teken dat de regering geen kernonderzeeërs gaat kopen. Tenminste een journalist speculeerde, dat Perrin Beatty te ambitieus was, teveel aandacht trok en dat Monsieur hem een toontje lager liet zingen. Politici zijn net als soldaten in een veldslag: je moet zeker weten dat je de man achter je kunt vertrouwen.

★★★
De recente ekonomiese ontwikkelingen werden ook druk besproken. De aankoop van Canadese bedrijven door Amerikaanse ondernemingen wordt door sommigen gezien als een normale gang van zaken in het huidige wereldbeeld, terwijl anderen het handelsverdrag als een donker spook op de achtergrond zien. Een feit is

natuurlijk, handelsverdrag of geen handelsverdrag, dat de consument aan het kortste eindje trekt waar konkurrenz vermindert. Onze bankiers huilen tranen met tuiten over meer intensieve konkurrenz, omdat American Express (ga de deur niet uit zonder hun kaartje) van plan is bankfilialen te openen in Canada.

★★★

Er is een verkiezing op komst in de Yukon. De enumerators gaan van deur tot deur in temperaturen die zelfs een ijsbeer zou willen vermijden. Veertienduizend kiesgerechtigden zullen hun stem uitbrengen op 20 februari. De PC's zijn hard aan 't werk om de meerderheid los te worstelen van de NDP.

★★★

Francis Fox, de president van de Liberale Partij in Quebec, zegt, dat het een uitgemaakte zaak is dat Turner van de zomer zijn ontslag zal indienen.

★★★

Canada wordt op de begrafenissen van Hirohito vertegenwoordigd door de

Gouverneur Generaal Madame Jeanne Sauvé, die vergezeld zal worden door John Crosbie, de Minister voor Handelszaken, en we hopen dat hij tijdens de plechtigheid zo lang zal kunnen zwijgen. 't Zal 'm niet meevallen.

★★★

Wist u dat het aantal zelfmoorden in Canada steeds hoger wordt? Er werden in 1986 3700 gevallen van zelfmoord in ons land gerapporteerd. Het Bureau voor de Statistiek konkludeerde, dat vooral onder jonge mannen in de leeftijdsgroep van 20-24 jaar een duidelijke toename van zelfmoord waarneembaar is.

★★★

Geschiedenis vermeldt niet alle interessante gebeurtenissen. Een lid van Zijne Majestiet's kabinet inspekteerde een jaar of twaalf of zo geleden eens de douane op het vliegveld in Vancouver. Het gebeurde net toen een aantal vliegtuigen tegelijkertijd aankwamen en zodoende een lange rij voor de douaneloketten veroorzaakten. Een nogal geirriteerde man riep uit: "Wie is hier eigenlijk de baas?" Robert Stanbury antwoordde die kreet en zei met luid stem: "Ik, ik ben de Minister voor Belastingzaken." De uiterst verbolgen reiziger kwam naar voren en schopte de minister

tegen de schenen. Zo iets lees je niet in een geschiedenis boek. Alleen in C.C.

★★★

Maandag 30 januari kon een Hollandse piek gekocht worden voor 56 Canadese centen. Als u nog ergens reischeques heeft liggen is het nu wel een goede tijd om ze in te wisselen.

★★★

Rusland werd weer geteisterd door een aardbeving die gevolgd werd door modderlawines, tengevolge waarvan hele dorpen bedolven werden onder de modder. Het aantal slachtoffers liep weer in de duizenden.

★★★

De laatste Russische troepen staan op het punt Afghanistan te verlaten. Hoeveel vertrouwen men heeft in de militaire macht van de door de Russen geïnstalleerde regering blijkt wel uit het feit, dat, met de Russische militairen, de overgrote meerderheid van diplomatiek personeel ook de hoofdstad Kaboel verlaat.

★★★

In een verkiezing in West Berlijn zagen verdaasde "Heil Hitler fanatiekelingen" hun invloed vermeerderen. Onder leiding van een ex S.S.-er kregen de Sieg Heil-idioten eventjes elf van de 138 zetels, hetgeen zelfs twee zetels in het West-Duitse parlement

opleverde. In Nederland werden de laatste twee van die oorlogsmisdadigers vanuit de gevangenis in Breda naar huis gestuurd. Het veroorzaakte een vloed van emoties. Ik zag ze op de TV, herkende ze niet, maar ik raakte even iets aan in mezelf dat ik liever kwijt wil. Ik betwijfel of de schrikbeelden ooit uit het bewustzijn zullen verdwijnen. Het is net als dat geluid van een fluitende kogel vlak naast je hoofd. Die kogel fluit ook je hele leven maar door.

★★★

Een zekere mijnheer Paul Swales werd in de laatste drie weken vijf keer door Jehovah Getuigen vermaand zich te bekeren. Het werd mijnheer Swales, die een overtuigd Christen is, te bar en hij ging over tot resolute tegenmaatregelen. Hij organiseerde een één-mans protest demonstratie voor de Kingdom Hall in Niagara Falls. Dat geval herinnerde me aan een bordje dat ik eens zag op een deur in Den Haag: "Aan de deur wordt niet gekocht en we zijn al bekeerd."

Carl D. Tuyl is predikant in de First Christian Reformed Church, Kingston, Ont.

Kerkdiensten op cassette in de Nederlandse taal

Rev. Jac Geuzebroek

Als sinds 1975 zijn kerkdiensten in de Nederlandse taal beschikbaar in cassette-vorm. Deze diensten worden opgenomen in een aantal kerken en hiervan worden cassettes gemaakt, die gedistribueerd worden over heel Canada en de Verenigde Staten. In samenwerking met Lenie en Jack Brouwer, die voor duplicatie, verspreiding en administratie zorgen, heb ik de lezers van De Wachter al jarenlang op de hoogte gehouden van deze diensten. Helaas kan dat niet meer en we waarderen het daarom des te meer dat wij van deze Nederlandstalige pagina's van

Calvinist Contact gebruik kunnen maken om u over onze "prekendienst" te kunnen vertellen.

Verscheidene van de eerste trouwe luisteraars zijn heengegaan en ik merk telkens weer, dat de mensen die nu zo langzamerhand tot de oudere garde beginnen te behoren, niet op de hoogte zijn van de beschikbaarheid van deze Nederlandstalige diensten. En dan komen er verzoeken van mensen die schrijven: "Wij wisten niets af van deze gelegenheid om Nederlandstalige diensten te verkrijgen." Ik herinner mij nog de eerste abonnee die schreef over zijn isolatie in de

V.S. Hij kon geen Engels spreken of verstaan en was enthousiast toen hij las dat met deze prekendienst begonnen zou worden. Anderen luisteren vaak in groepjes, al of niet georganiseerd door de diakenen van de plaatselijke kerk. Die komen dan op een avond bij elkaar en luisteren gezamenlijk naar de diensten.

De orde van dienst zit er altijd bij en zij kunnen dus meezingen en ook de Bijbelteksten opzoeken en meelesen.

Voor velen is deze prekendienst een zegen en de vele brieven die ontvangen worden zijn daar het duidelijke bewijs van. Zij waren een aansporing voor mij.

vrienden, Lenie en Jack, om door te blijven gaan met deze niet geringe administratieve taak. Daarom ook deze herinnering en deze opwekking, opdat de kring van luisteraars zo groot mogelijk moge blijven.

Ik zal nog even de voorwaarden noemen die verbonden zijn aan het abonnement van de prekendienst. U hebt de keuze om iedere week een cassette te ontvangen, twee cassettes per maand of één cassette in de maand. Per cassette komt de prijs op \$3.00. Daarbij zijn alle kosten inbegrepen, ook de frankeerkosten naar u toe en voor het terugsturen van de

cassette, nadat u die beluisterd hebt. En mocht u een dienst zo mooi vinden dat u de cassette wilt behouden, dan kan dat ook, maar daarvoor wordt u dan \$1.50 extra berekend. Voor verdere inlichtingen kunt u schrijven naar Mr. and Mrs. J. Brouwer, 27 Alpaca Drive, Scarborough, Ontario, M1J 2Z8.

Moge God zijn zegen blijven gebieden op Zijn woord, dat ook op deze wijze gebracht mag worden aan zo velen, die anders van de prediking ervan zouden zijn buitengesloten.

Rev. Jac Geuzebroek is emeritus predikant en woont in Whitby, Ont.

Nieuwe gezangboeken niet bij Eaton's gekocht

Mr. Wolters vraagt onze mening over het nieuwe gezangboek van de Christian Reformed Church (Jan. 6, 1989). Ik moet zeggen het is een prachtig gebonden boek. Het opent zich heel gemakkelijk, laat zich prettig houden en de bladzijden blijven na het omslaan rustig liggen.

Met de gedrukte inhoud ben ik het niet eens. Om met de notenbalk te beginnen, deze is 7/32 van een inch breed. De balk is met 5 hele dunne lijntjes gedrukt, waarin en waarop de kleine noten precies passen.

Daarentegen heeft ons oude hymboek notenbalken 8/32

van een inch breed, de lijnen zijn dikker gedrukt. De noten daarin en daarop zijn eenvormig gedrukt en daardoor duidelijker. Een prachtig boek.

Als ik samen met iemand uit het nieuwe hymboek moet zingen, geeft de inspanning om de woorden te lezen en de kleine noten op de juiste plaats te zien mij een onprettig gevoel om te zingen, want ik kom altijd achterop.

Als je het oude en het nieuwe hymboek geopend naast elkaar legt en je neemt van ieder een bladzij tussen duim en vinger, voel en zie je de betere kwaliteit papier van het oude

hymboek. Het papier van het nieuwe hymboek is dunner en heel licht grijs van kleur, vandaar dat de fijnere druk nog minder tot zijn recht komt.

Helaas, de hymboeken zijn niet bij Eaton's gekocht en gedane zaken nemen geen keer.

Het enige wat de kerken kunnen doen, is te zorgen dat iedereen van klein tot groot, in de kerkdienst zijn en haar eigen hymboek heeft om gemeenschappelijk zingen ten volle mogelijk te maken.

K. Mazereeuw
Mississauga, Ont.

Vertrouwen op God

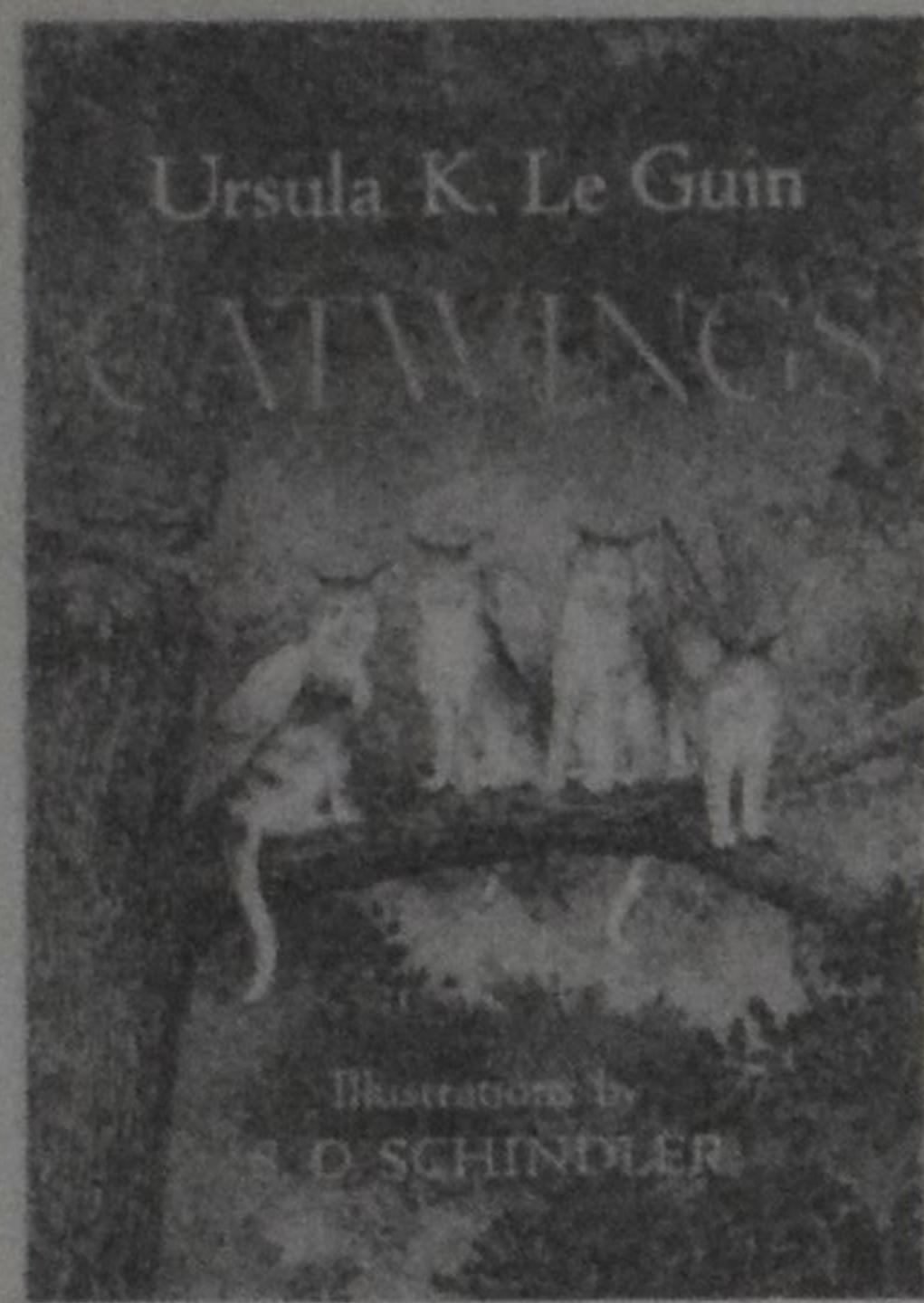
"O Heer, in Uw arm ben ik veilig; als Gij mij houdt, heb ik niets te vrezen; als Gij mij loslaat, dan is er geen hoop meer. Ik weet niets van de toekomst, maar ik vertrouw op U. Ik bid U, dat Gij mij wilt geven wat goed voor mij is; ik bid U, dat Gij van mij wilt nemen wat mijn heil zou schaden. Ik laat alles over aan U alleen, omdat Gij het weet en ik niet. Wanneer Gij smart en leed over mij doet komen, geef mij dan genade, ze op de rechte wijze te dragen: bewaar mij voor prikkelbaarheid en zelfzucht. Wanneer Gij mij gezondheid en kracht schenkt en succes in deze wereld, laat mij dan steeds op mijn hoede zijn, dat deze grote gaven mij niet van U verwijderen. Leer mij U te kennen, U te geloven, U lief te hebben, U te dienen, voor U te leven. En laat mij sterven op die tijd en op die wijze, dat Gij er het hoogste in verheerlijkt kunt worden."

Gebet van
John Henry Newman

Ingezonden door Mrs. J. Ouwehand, Hamilton, Ont.

Stories for children

Fun with fantasy



Catwings, by Ursula K. Le Guin, illustrated by S.D. Schindler. Orchard Books Canada, 1988. Markham, Ont.: Hardcover, 40 pp. \$14.95. Reviewed by Doro J. Bakker, Orangeville, Ontario.

"Mrs. Jane Tabby could not

explain why all four of her children had wings." But living in a terrible neighbourhood that was getting worse by the day made the problem of her children's wings the least of her worries. She was proud of her young tabbies and cared for them lovingly. When disaster struck one day, Mrs. Tabby knew her children could no longer stay, and just as clearly she knew why they had wings. The time had come for the four winged tabbies to leave the security of the dumpster they called home. And so, after a good dinner and copious tears, the four tabbies purred their farewells, spread their wings and took to the sky.

They eventually landed in a forest, a world totally unfamiliar to them. The soft ground, dead leaves, grass, twigs and worms were most pleasing. Yet the woods

contained its own hazards, like learning to get along with outraged and suspicious birds.

It is not until one of the tabbies discovers the Hands — the right kind of Hands, the kind of Hands their mother had spoken of affectionately — that they find their haven.

Ursula Le Guin, one of North America's finest writers of fantasy for children, has written this pleasing adventure for 7-10 year olds. This book is wonderful for reading aloud. *Catwings* draws readers into Le Guin's imaginary world. Here one eagerly follows the adventures of the four tabbies, marvelling at, yet totally accepting the extraordinary situation of their wings. Le Guin skilfully plays between fantasy and reality, making her characters and story totally believable. S. D. Schindler has beautifully illustrated the text.

The horse in the hotel

No Place For A Horse, by Norma Charles. Markham, Ont.: Overlea House, 1988. Softcover, 141 pp., \$3.95. Reviewed by Doro Bakker, Orangeville, Ontario.

Imagine! Getting a real-live pony for your birthday! Eight year old Annie found exactly that waiting in her yard on the morning of her birthday.

No Place For A Horse tells the story of Annie and her sister Jane. Along with their mother, they live in and operate the local hotel.

Keeping a horse when you live in a hotel presents all sorts of problems. Where do you keep him? The sisters have little time to ponder their dilemma. A fierce prairie storm forces Annie and Jane to act quickly and so into the basement they coax the startled horse. Now the trouble begins.

The suspense, humour and action combine to make *No Place For A Horse* an appealing story. Young readers who have just begun to manage novels on their own will especially appreciate this book.



Norma Charles

Seeing with different eyes

ALL I SEE

Story by Cynthia Rylant

Pictures by Peter Catalanotto



All I See, Cynthia Rylant, illustrated by Peter Catalanotto. Markham,

Ontario: Orchard Books, 1988. Hardcover, 29 pp. \$20.95

All I See is a gentle story about friendship and painting and dreaming. Gregory is a painter who spends his days beside a lake painting pictures and whistling Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*. Every now and then he climbs into his canoe to drift and to dream beneath the blue sky. Charlie hides in the bushes and watches, fascinated, yet too shy to let himself be seen.

When Charlie finally summons enough courage to study Gregory's paintings close-up, he can't believe what he sees. Gregory's art portrays nothing that Charlie sees as he gazes over the lake. Yet he likes what he sees and so begins a friendship between a painter and a young boy.

All I See is a book filled with light and colour. It makes a strong visual impact. Each page depicts the same scene at the lake, but from a different perspective. With every new page the reader enjoys a deeper appreciation of the beauty of the lake.

Cynthia Rylant's warm story was written for 5-7-year-olds.



Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Prayer

"They devoted themselves ... to prayer." (Acts 2:42)

In 1540 Martin Luther's good friend Frederick Myconius became deathly sick. Believing his life was nearly ended, he trembled as he wrote a fond farewell to Luther.

Luther received the letter with no little stir of soul. Immediately he penned back to Myconius a letter which contains these classic lines: *I command thee in the name of God to live because I still have need of thee in the work of reforming the church ... The Lord will never let me hear that thou art dead, but will permit thee to survive me. For this I am praying, this is my will, and may my will be done, because I seek only to glorify the name of God.*

Pompous?

How could Luther be so sure? I've heard so many strange stories about knowing the will of God in my years of ministry that I bristle with skepticism at talk like that. A man travels half-way across the continent to a Pentecostal prayer meeting. While there he meets an old friend, now divorced. Late that evening they phone his wife and tell her that during a prayer meeting God assured them that they would one day be married, and they ask her for her blessing. When she refuses such a foolish thing, they put another "spiritual" friend on the line who warns her about trying to go against the will of the Lord!

Or take the case of the Christian business man who gambles constantly, boasting to others that God approves, since he allows the man to win sometimes! Or the young woman who has such peace of mind that she should marry a fellow, knowing that it has to be of the Lord, but then later has the same peace of mind when she thinks about divorce! How quickly God changes his mind!

"My will be done!" It sounds pompous, doesn't it? It sounds like the cry of our godless age! "My will be done!"

Devotion

But Luther's ability to say that speaks volumes about the character of his prayer life. "... May my will be done," he writes, "because I seek only to glorify the name of God."

Prayer that wrestles with God and grasps at realities which are both wish and confidence rises only from a devoted heart. C.S. Lewis said that we only begin to pray with such confidence when we realize that "God is a father, not a senile uncle." And there is the start of a life that rests in the supporting strength of constant prayer. For only when we stop treating God like a Christmas-time Santa Claus, dispensing toys that break on Boxing Day, and return to a delight in on-going friendship with him, will we view prayer as "the Christian's vital breath, the Christian's native air."

A person once commented on the third petition of the Lord's Prayer: "May it be said of us that we do whatever we please, because we please to do the will of our Father in heaven." In spite of the spiritual struggles of his soul, Luther knew how real a wish like that could become.

Deeper prayer

In his book, *The Meaning of Being a Christian*, Harry Emerson Fosdick wrote: "When through experience of sin or sorrow, or through hard practical struggle, we come to a real maturity, we always tend to grow out of crying to God, 'Give me ...,' and into the deeper prayer, 'Make me ...' In a word, we cease valuing God merely because of the things he may give, and we come into the love of God himself and the desire to be made over by him."

Such prayers are not completed in one minute nor five. In fact, they seem to linger on during the waking hours of the day as life itself becomes a dialogue with God.

"They devoted themselves ... to prayer." Do you?